Anecdotes for Reflection

Part 4



THE
WORLD
FEDERATION

بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

Anecdotes for Reflection

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:Published in print

The Islamic Education Board of the World Federation of

:Digital Publisher

Ghaemiyeh center of computerized researches

Contents

Anecdotes for Reflection Part ۴

BOOk ID

Author(s): Sayyid Ali Akbar Sadaaqat

Publisher(s): The Islamic Education Board of the World Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Muslim Communities

Category: Kids Corner Ethics

Topic Tags: Anecdotes Reflection Stories Companions Miscellaneous information: ISBN ۹۷۸ ۰ ۹۵۷۰۹۸۵ ۸ ۹

Person Tags: Prophet Muhammad Ahlul Bayt

point

.Moral stories from the lives of the prophets, the Ahlul Bayt and their companions

Foreword

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

,Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) has said

بُعِثْتُ لِأُتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الأَخْلاَقِ

".I have been sent to perfect the good morals"

The Islamic Education department of The World Federation has a proud tradition of producing literature in the field of Islamic Ethics, in its long history of service to the community. In continuation of this service, we are pleased to present part four of the Farsi work 'Yaksad Mawzu, wa Pansad Dastan' by Sayyid Ali Akbar Sadaqat. The .translation from Farsi to English was carried out by Shaykh Shahnawaz Mahdavi

I would like to personally thank both Sayyid Ali Akbar Sadaqat and Shaykh Shahnawaz Mahdavi for their efforts in bringing this collection of very practical, inspirational and

motivational stories into the hands of lay-people. The ‘Anecdotes for Reflection’ .series has proven to be very popular amongst all sectors of the community

Indeed some of my own Zakir colleagues make use of them for lectures, as do Madrasah teachers for their lessons to the younger generation. The far-reaching effects of what Shaykh Sadaqat and Shaykh Mahdavi have produced will inshallah be .appreciated for years and generations to come, ameen

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pray to Allah (SWT) to reward them amply and to grant them increased success in their lives in this world and the hereafter.

Shaykh Abbas M H Ismail

Islamic Education

The World Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Muslim Communities

Dhul Qa'dah ۱۴۳۳ / October ۲۰۱۲

Introduction

There are numerous ways for man to achieve guidance and emerge from darkness and move towards light. Allah, for the prosperity of man and perfection of his morals, has created proofs, evidences and vestiges(۱) so great in number that they are beyond reckoning and computation. For the guidance of mankind, He sent the Prophets with Clear Proofs(۲), books, miracles and signs so that perhaps, the people might perceive the right path and attain prosperity and success.

During the entire period of his prophethood, the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), with regards to refinement of souls and perfection of morals, was an exemplar in speech and did, and had (even) said, "I have been sent (as a Prophet) for (the purpose of) perfecting the morals"(۳).

Man's problem lies in his disregard for virtues, acquisition of vices, inclination towards lust and obedience to the Shaytan. Some men stoop so low that they even lead their lives akin to animals. For the purpose of refinement and treatment of human morals, abatement of rebelliousness and controlling the natural disposition, the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) spared no effort and mentioned all that was necessary in this regard.

Attainment of prosperity in this world and the hereafter is only accomplished under the auspices of a teacher and at the

۱- Surat Ibrahim (۱۴), Verse ۵: وَ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسى بِآيَاتِنَا أَنْ أَخْرِجْ قَوْمَكَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلـى النُّورِ

۲- Suratul Hadid (۵۷), Verse ۲۵: لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَ أَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَ الْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ

۳- Safinatul Bihar, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۱۱: بُعِثْتُ لِأُتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الأَخْلَاقِ

same time, not every person can completely identify the two extremes of moral behaviour in order to demonstrate the moderate and balanced path. Allah, Who is the Absolute Wise, introduced all the Prophets, especially the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), as the 'teacher and trainer' of morals so that the people, by following in his footsteps, distance themselves from vices and acquire the honour of the two worlds.

In the Qur`an, there exists a chapter by the name of القَصَص (The Narratives), which itself is proof that man is in nid of stories and narratives.

In many places in the Qur`an, stories of Prophets, kings and nations have been mentioned. In addition, Allah has presented issues pertaining to wars, peace, family, religion, society and other similar topics, in the form of stories and narratives. By reading these accounts, the people can comprehend and distinguish the paths of progress and regress, and ascent and descent in every field, especially morals.

The entire chapter Yusuf has been devoted to the story of Yusuf, Yaqub, Zulaikha and the brothers. In the beginning of the Chapter, Allah says:

"We narrate to you (O' Prophet) the most excellent of the narratives by (means of) what We have revealed to you this Qur`an."(1)

While, in the concluding verse of this very chapter, He says:

"Indeed (there) in the history of theirs, is a lesson for men of understanding."(2)

Indeed, one of the distinguished feats of the Qur`an is this very story of Yusuf (a.s.), which it refers to as the 'best of the

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١- Surat Yusuf (١٢), Verse ٣: نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْکَ أَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ بِمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْکَ هذَا الْقُرْآنَ

٢- Ibid., Verse ١١١: لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِأُولِي الأَلْبَابِ

:narratives' and at the end of which, it says

In these stories there is a lesson for those, who desire to take a moral and adopt the“ ”.path of the Perfect Men

In this regard, Amirul Mo`minin (a.s), in Nahjul Balagha, says to his son Imam Hasan (.(a.s

Even though I have not reached the age, which those before me have, yet I have“ looked into their behaviour and reflected over the events of their lives. I walked amongst their ruins till I was as one of them. In fact, by virtue of those of their affairs that have become known to me, it is as though I have lived with them from the first to the last. I have therefore been able to discern the impure from the clean and the benefit from the harm. I have selected for you the choicest of those matters and ”.collected for you their good points while keeping away from you the useless ones

Years ago, I had written a book on ethics (for the treatment of vices), by the name of Ihya al-Qulub. Ever since, I had been reflecting over the idea of compiling a book on moral stories. It so happened that divinely, an opportunity came up before me and with it the motivation for undertaking this assignment. In spite of the lack of necessary books, I contented myself with those that were available and commenced .the compilation of this book, recording four to five stories for every topic

I have certainly not come across

any book which has been compiled in this fashion. Books like Namunah-e-Maarif-e-Islam and Pand-e-Tarikh have been present for around ۳۰ years and I have made use of them too (in the course of this collection) but in those books, Qur`anic verses, traditions, poems and analogies have all been accumulated together; whereas, I have sought to satisfy myself by mentioning only the stories, while abstaining from presenting considerations relating to Qur`anic verses, traditions, poems and analogies, which would not only have increased the size of the book but would also .have made it difficult to understand for many of the readers

This collection caters for the general public, young and old alike, who are acquainted with basic reading and writing. As far as possible, I have endeavoured to omit scientific issues and those aspects, pertaining to traditions, whose comprehension .would be demanding and exacting for the general masses

Although some of the stories may not possibly possess any aspect of reality and actuality, what I have focused on is the admonition and 'taking-a-lesson' aspect contained in them, which hopefully, the honourable readers would perceive and .comprehend

As far as the issue of associating a story to a particular topic is concerned, I do not claim that the stories allude to just one topic or that particular one which has been specified here; rather there are stories which can be associated with several other .topics too, in addition to the topic under which it has been mentioned here

When narrating a text or presenting

a translation, I have not restricted myself to the literal meaning but, for a better comprehension, have resorted to paraphrasing, allusion and conceptual explanation .too

To avoid interference of topics with one another and prolongation of discussion, I have refrained from bringing forth topics which are related to those already presented. For example, Ithar (altruism) has been presented as one of the topics but .Infaq (spending in the path of Allah) has been excluded

To prevent the reader from experiencing exhaustion and boredom, and for the sake of variety, I have desisted from presenting stories of a monotonous kind, like those of philosophers and poets, but have strived to make the collection varied. In this way, .the readers will hopefully, derive a greater pleasure from the narratives

In view of the fact that trustworthiness ought to be adhered to, I have referred every narrative presented here, to the book from which it has been extracted, also mentioning the volume and page. It is only with the objective of achieving a greater fluency of work that I have endeavoured to correct, polish or alter some of the words .or sentences of the original text

It is hoped that the readers, after going through the stories and narratives, reflect upon and take lessons from them so that they are able to create within themselves, a new impetus towards perfection of morals; and Allah Willing, those who are endowed with laudable morals, should relate them to others, for rectification and remedy of the .weaker souls

Sayyid ‘Ali

Akbar Sadaaqat

:(And our final prayer (is

.All Praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds

[Mordad, ۱۳۷۸ [July ۱۹۹۹

Knowledge .۶۱

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ عَلَّمَکَ ما لَمْ تَکُنْ تَعْلَمُ

(And He has taught you what you did not know"(۱"

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

لاَ یُحِبُّ الْعِلْمَ اِلاَّ السَّعِیْدُ

(None loves knowledge except the one, who is fortunate (and prosperous)"(۲"

Short Explanation

The way to attain cognisance of God and the Sharia'h is by means of knowledge. Knowledge is an embellishment for man in this world, and causes its owner to become .one of those with whom God is pleased

One who possesses knowledge, ought to realize that the acquisition of an hour of knowledge demands a life-time of practice (in accordance with the knowledge). Thus, when one seeks to acquire knowledge he should bear in mind that he has to practice what he acquires. This is because God, regarding a scholar that does not act in accordance with the knowledge that he possesses, has said: "From seventy of my punishments (that I would subject him to), the least that I would do to him is to (remove the sweetness of My remembrance from his heart."(۳

Knowledge does not mean mere memorization of terminologies, or information that is not beneficial, or information that is accompanied by evil intentions such as exhibiting one's scholarly calibre before other scholars - in which case it would only serve to be an encumbrance and burden - rather, it means the comprehension of piety, (divine) cognisance

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۱- Qur'an, ۴:۱۱۳.

۲- Jami' al-Sa'adat, v. ۱, p. ۱۰۴.

۳- Tadhkirah al-Haqaiq, p. ۵۸.

.and certainty

Al-Hajj Sheikh Abbas Qummi (۱

:The late Sheikh Abbas Qummi, the author of Mafatih al-Jinan narrates

When I had compiled and published the book Manazil al-Akhirah, it reached the" hands of Sheikh Abd al-Razzaq who used to explain religious rulings daily before .(dhuhr time in the holy courtyard of Hadhrat Ma'sumah (peace be upon her

My father, Kerbalai Muhammad Ridha, was greatly fond of Sheikh Abd al-Razzaq and would attend his sessions every day. The Sheikh had procured the book Manazil al-Akhirah and used to read from it for his audience.

One day my father returned home and said to me: O Sheikh Abbas! I wish you would be like that person, who explains religious rulings, and climb onto the pulpit and recite .from the book in the manner he recited for us today

Several times I felt the urge to tell him that the book was authored by me, but I restrained myself and just said to him: "Pray to God that He may grant (me) grace and (success (for such a venture)." (۱

The Tutor of Jibraeel (۲

Once, Jibraeel was engaged in a conversation with the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) when Imam Ali (peace be upon him) entered. As soon as Jibraeel's eyes fell upon him he stood up and displayed great respect towards him .((peace be upon him

Witnessing this, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) asked: O Jibraeel! For what reason did you display such respect for this young man? Jibraeel replied: How could I not exhibit deference

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.Seema-e-Farzanagan, p. ۱۵۳; Mard-e-Taqwa wa Fadhilat, p. ۴۸ -۱

towards him when I am under his obligation by virtue of the fact that he has taught me!

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) inquired: What teaching? Jibraeel replied: After God created me, He questioned me: “Who are you and who am I?” I did not know what to answer and so remained silent for some time whereupon this youth appeared before me in a state of light and taught me that I should say: “You are the Glorious and Beautiful Lord while I am Jibraeel, a lowly servant.” And it is for this reason that when I saw him now, I paid my respects to him.

How old are you, Jibraeel? Asked the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny). He replied: O Prophet of God! In the heavens there is a star, which rises once every thirty thousand years, and I have witnessed it thirty thousand times!(١)

٣) The Practicing A’alim

Sheikh Ahmad Ardabili, popularly known as Muqaddas Ardabili (d. ٩٩٣ AH) was an abstentious and practicing scholar, and lived contemporaneous to scholars such as Sheikh Bahaai, Mulla Sadra and Mir Damaad. His grave lies within the holy shrine of Imam Ali (a.s.) in the city of Najaf. It has been reported that once a person had come to Najaf for pilgrimage and not recognising him, had requested him to wash his clothes.

Muqaddas agreed and after washing it, brought it to the pilgrim. It was at this point that the pilgrim happened to become aware

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١- Tuhfah al-Majalis, p. ٨٠.

of his identity and felt greatly embarrassed at his own behaviour, and the people too :rebuked him for his conduct. Muqaddas, however, said

Why do you censure him? Nothing (significant) has happened. The rights of brethren-(in-faith are far more than what I have done for him.(۱)

(The Dangers of Possessing Knowledge without Prior Purification (of the Soul (۴

Ali Ibn Muhammad al-Mawardi, an inhabitant of Basra, was a judge, a teacher of the :Shafi'i jurisprudence and a contemporary of Sheikh Tusi. He narrates

I had expended great effort in writing a book on the religious rulings relating to transaction and business, and had memorized all the details in connection with the topic such that when the book reached completion, it crossed my mind that I was the .most learned of all in this topic; I was overcome with pride, conceit and vanity

One day, two Arab bedouins came to my assembly and sought to know from me the ruling in connection with a transaction that had transpired in their village. The issue also had four other offshoots to it; however I was unable to provide answers to any .one of them

For a while I was lost in thought, I then said to myself: You claim to be the most learned of all your contemporaries in this chapter of jurisprudence; how is it that you ?are unable to answer the questions of the inhabitants of the village

Turning to them, I confessed: I do not know the answers. Astonished, they said: You .ought to study more in order that you are able to answer the questions

They left me

.Muntakhab al-Tawarikh, p. ۱۸۱ -۱

and proceeded to refer their queries to a person, who in terms of knowledge, was inferior to even some of my students, but when they presented their questions to him, he was able to provide them with the answers. The Bedouins were delighted to hear .the answers and praising him, left for their village

Al-Mawardi says: This incident caused me to come to my senses and extricate my soul from conceit and vanity of knowledge so that I may not incline towards self-praise in (the future.(١

Asma'i and the Officious Grocer (٥

:Asma'i(٢) narrates

The initial period of my education was endured in poverty and indigence. Every morning when I would leave my house for acquiring knowledge I would have to pass by an officious grocer who would question me: Where are you going? I would reply: I am going to gain knowledge. On my way back home, he would repeat the same .question

At times, he would say: 'Don't waste your life. Why don't you learn some work so that you can become wealthy and affluent? Give me these books and papers of yours; I '.shall put them in the wine-jar and you will see nothing shall remain of them

He would constantly reproach me as a result of which I would become disturbed, .mentally

Days passed by with such great financial hardships that I would be unable to buy even .a garment for myself

Years passed till one day a messenger of the ruler of Basra approached me and asked me to present myself before the ruler. I said to

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.Safinah al-Bihar, v. ٢, p. ١۶٢ -١

٢ - A'bd Al-Malik Ibn Qareeb Basri (d. ٢١٣ A.H.) had been of the great narrators of poems and Arab traditions, and has several books to his credit.

him: “How can I present myself before him in this torn garment?“ The messenger departed, only to arrive again with some clothes and money. I wore the clothes and arrived before the ruler. He said: I have selected you to educate the Caliph’s son and .so you must proceed to Baghdad

I set off for Baghdad and approached the Abbasid caliph, Harun al-Rashid, who ordered me to educate his son Muhammad Amin. With this, my financial state .gradually became extremely good

Years passed and when Muhammad Amin had achieved a high level of knowledge, Harun desired to test him asked him to deliver a sermon. One Friday, Muhammad delivered an extremely eloquent sermon, which greatly pleased Harun and so, turning to me, said: What do you aspire for? I replied: I wish to return to my birth-place, Basra. He accepted my request and arranged for me to return to Basra with great .honour and esteem

The people of Basra came to meet me and amongst them was the officious grocer. As soon as my eyes fell upon him, I said: Do you observe the fruits which that knowledge ?and those papers have yielded

Apologetic and rueful, he said: I uttered those words out of ignorance. Even though the returns may be delayed, but knowledge does yield returns that possess worldly .and religious benefits

Deeds .۶۲

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

مَن عَمِلَ صاَلحِاً فَلِنَفسِهِ وَ مَن اَساءَ فَعَلَيهاَ

وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ

Whoever does good, it is for his own soul, and whoever does evil, it is“

(against it; and your Lord is not in the least unjust to the servants."(1)

:(Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him

كُونُوا دُعاَةَ النَّاسِ بِاَعماَلِكُم وَ لاَ تَكُونُوا دُعاَةً بِاَلسِنَتِكُم

Invite the people (towards guidance) by means of your deeds and not by means of (your tongues(2)

Short Explanation

Since ancient times it has been said that the markets of deeds and actions are bearish; meaning that to a certain extent all the people possess awareness of the rulings of religion, however, when it comes to deeds and actions, they falter and .usually fall short of what is expected of them

All deeds of man are recorded in his Book of Deeds, and only his deeds shall .accompany him after his death

If a person's deeds have been solely for the sake of God and without having trampled the rights of others or offended any person, God shall suffice for him with respect to all his affairs in this world and the hereafter, will regard him with love and affection, .and will exhibit pride over him and his actions before the angels

The Lawful Work (1

:Hasan Ibn Husain Anbari narrates

Over a period of fourteen years I kept writing letters to Imam Ridha (peace be upon him), seeking permission from him to allow me to work within the administrative setup .(of the ruler (of the city

Since the Imam (peace be upon him) never replied, I, in my final letter, wrote: I fear oppression and persecution. Those working with the Sultan say: "You are of the Shiites and this is why you do not co-operate

۱- Qur'an, ۴۱:۴۶.

۲- Safinah al-Bihar, v. ۲, p. ۲۷۸.

".with us and are evasive

In reply, the Imam (peace be upon him) said: From your letter I sense that you fear for your life. You are aware that if you are placed in a (high and) responsible position, you can adhere to and act upon the teachings and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny); this would cause your subordinates to also follow .the dictates of your faith

If you happen to come across instances whereby you have to deal with poor and indigent Mu'minin, ensure that you exhibit consideration, toleration and forbearance !towards them

And since you would now be working with them, it would be deemed that you are one of them, (and thus) you would have to strive hard to perform God-pleasing deeds, since these deeds would then serve to compensate your co-operation with the illegal .ruling apparatus

However, if you are unable to act in this manner, then it is not permissible for you to (take up this employment.(۱

The Practicing Ones and Paradise (۲

:Imam Baqir (peace be upon him) once related

Once, when my father was seated in the company of his companions, addressing them, he (peace be upon him) said: Which of you is willing to hold flaming fire in his ?hand till the flames die out

All those present, as if to express their inability, lowered their heads and remained !silent

I said: Dear father! Do you permit me to do it? He said: No, dear son! You are from me and I am from you. It is

.Baa Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Kuneem, p. ۶۵ -۱

.these people whom I was addressing

After this he repeated his request three times but when no one spoke up, he (peace be upon him) said: How numerous are those who talk and how few are those who act. .I only wanted to have you tested

Imam Baqir (peace be upon him) said: By God! At that moment I observed that they were overcome with such embarrassment that it appeared as if the earth was pulling them towards itself. Perspiration flowed from the foreheads of some, but they did not .raise their lowered eyes

When my father observed their embarrassment, he said to them: May God forgive you! I did not intend anything except goodness. Paradise has many ranks, one of .which pertains to none but those who practice and act

Imam Baqir (peace be upon him) said: After these words (from my father) when I looked at them, they seemed to have calmed down and appeared as if they have (been relieved of a heavy and weighty burden.(١

The Working Youth (٣

Once, when the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was seated with a group of his companions, he observed a strong and robust youth hard at work since the early morning. Those around him (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) remarked: Had this youth expended his strength and energy in the way of God, he .would have been worthy of immense commendation and praise

Hearing this, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: Do not

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١- Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, v. ٢, p. ١۴٠, Kashkool of Bahrani, v. ٢, p. ٩٣.

utter such words, for there are several probabilities that exist; he could be working to earn his sustenance in order that he does not have to depend upon others, in which case he is striving in the way of God. He could be working to look after the needs of his feeble parents and weak children, so that they are not dependent upon other people, .in which case he is again striving in the way of God

However, if by means of this work he seeks to increase his wealth and manifest his superiority over those who are underprivileged, then he has travelled on the path of (Satan and deviated from the right path.(۱

Good) Deeds Cause a Jew to Become a Muslim) (۴

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) once owed a few dinars to a Jew. One day, the Jew sought his money from him (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), whereupon he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: Presently I do not have any money. The Jew said: I shall not leave you till you repay .my money

Hearing this, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: If that is the case then I too shall sit by you here. He (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) sat down beside the Jew and continued to do so for such a long period that he recited .his Dhuhr, Asr, Maghrib, Isha and the morning prayers of the next day, right there

Observing the

.Dunyaa-e-Jawaanaan, p. ۳۱۶; Mahajjah al-Baydha, v. ۳, p. ۱۴۰ -۱

state of affairs, the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) began to threaten the Jew, but he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said to them: What is this that you are doing?

How can a Jew hold you a captive? They replied. Hearing this, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) explained: God has not sent me as a Prophet in order that I permit those, who have established a religious covenant with me, to be oppressed.

Till sunrise of the next day he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) continued to be seated there, whereupon the Jew, addressing the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), said: O Prophet of God! By God! It was not impertinence and audaciousness that prompted me to behave in the manner I did with you; rather, I desired to know whether the traits mentioned in the Torah about the Final Prophet, conformed with you or not?

This is because I have read in the Torah that Muhammad Ibn Abdullah would be born in Makkah, and subsequently emigrate to Medina; he would neither possess a bad temperament, nor would he be discourteous. He would not speak with a loud voice and would not be foul-mouthed and abusive.

I now bear witness to the Unity of God and to your Prophethood, and I place my entire wealth at your disposal for you to utilise in whatsoever manner God commands

(you to. (١

The Conduct of Mua'wiyah and Abu al-Aswad Du'ali (۵

Mua'wiyah, in order to attract people towards himself, would usually send them money, honey or other similar gifts. Impoverished people who could not even afford curd to satiate their hunger, would suddenly receive leather sacs of honey from Mua'wiyah, which at times would even contain money which he would place in them. All this was done to ensure that they do not incline towards Amir al-Mu'minin (peace be upon him). Those who would be willing to reject the money and also refuse to abandon Ali (peace be upon him) were very miniscule in number.

One day Mua'wiyah sent some sacs of honey for Abu al-Aswad Du'ali,(٢) one of the companions of Amir al-Mu'minin (peace be upon him), in order to attract him towards himself. Abu al-Aswad Du'ali was in the mosque when he was handed Mua'wiyah's letter and told: Sacs of honey have been delivered to your house.

Just as he reached home, he observed that his five year old daughter was about to put a finger, coated with honey, into her mouth. Seeing this, he shouted: O My Daughter! Do not eat it for it is poison. The girl immediately wiped her finger in the mud, and (after he had explained the situation to her) recited a couplet: O Son of Hind! Do you wish to destroy our faith and religion by means of pure honey? Never shall our support cease for Ali (peace be upon him).

Abu al-Aswad, holding Mua'wiyah's letter in one hand and his daughter's hand in

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١- Daastaan-ha-e-Zindagi-e-Payaambar, p. ٨٢; Bihar al-Anwar, v. ١۶, p. ١۶.

٢- He died due to plague, in the city of Basrah, at the age of eighty five and had witnessed the lives of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), Amir al-Mu'minin, Imam Hassan, Imam Husayn and Imam Sajjad (peace be upon them) in the course of his lifetime. He is credited with writing, upon the instructions and assistance of Amir al-Mu'minin (peace be upon him), a book on nahw (Arabic

.grammar) and placing dots on the Arabic letters that form the words of the Qur'an

the other, approached the Imam (peace be upon him) and recited his daughter's verses for him (peace be upon him). Hearing them, the Imam (peace be upon him) smiled and prayed for both of them.(1)

63. Food

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

وَ يُطعِمُونَ الطَّعامَ عَلىَ حُبِّهِ مِسكِيناً وَ يَتِيماً وَ اَسِيراً

"And they give food out of love for Him to the poor and the orphan and the captive"(2)

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has said:

إنَّ الاِطعامَ مِن مُوجِباَتِ الجَنَّهِ وَ المَغفِرَه

"Surely, feeding (others) is one of the causes for forgiveness (of sins) and entering into Paradise"(3)

Short Explanation

Do know that eating less for the well-being of one's interior and exterior self is always recommended. Consuming food is indispensable for the body and is necessary for procuring strength for performing acts of worship and other needful tasks. However, eating excessively causes the heart to become hard and cruel, passions to be aroused and the body to become sick. It ought to be noted that procurement of food by lawful means is mandatory; all the prophets and the auliya (friends of God) always abstained from impure, unlawful and dubious food, and constantly endeavoured to procure their livelihoods by lawful means. This is because the foremost of the achievements and successes is attained by means of the morsels that enter into the stomach.

1) The Excessive Eater and the Moderate Eater

Two mystics from Khorasan set out on a journey together. One of them was weak, consuming food only once in two nights, while the other was strong and

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۱- Khazinah al-Jawahir, p. ۵۳۶.

۲- Qur'an, ۷۶:۸.

۳- Safinah al-Bihar, v. ۲, p. ۸۳.

.healthy, eating food three times a day

As fate would have it, when they happened to be near a city both of them were taken into custody, charged with spying for the enemies, imprisoned in a house and the door of the house was locked and sealed. A couple of weeks later it came to be known that they were not spies but two innocent people. When the house was opened, it was observed that the strong mystic had died while the weak one was still alive. The fact that it was the stronger of the two, who had died caused great astonishment amongst .the people

Coming to know of the bewilderment of the people, a learned doctor from amongst them said: On the contrary, it would have been a matter of great astonishment had the weak mystic died; the death of the strong one was caused by the fact that being an excessive eater, he could not get himself to endure these fourteen days without food, whereas the weak one, being accustomed to eating less, was able to endure (this adversity and managed to survive.(١

Food with Friendship (٢

:Abd al-Rahman Ibn Hajjaj narrates

We were in the house of Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) and were having food with him when some more rice was brought for us. We sought to excuse ourselves from eating more whereupon the Imam (peace be upon him) said: Whoever likes us more .shall consume more food with us

Hearing this, we once again sat down and began eating the

.Hikaayat-ha-e-Gulistaan, p. ١٥۴ -١

.food. Witnessing this, the Imam (peace be upon him) stated: This is so much better

He (peace be upon him) then continued: One day, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was presented with some rice, whereupon he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) invited Salman, Abu Dharr and Miqdad to join him in eating it. They sought to excuse themselves but he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) insisted: "Whoever likes us more ought to eat more with us." Hearing this, all (of them ate to their full.(١

One Morsel and Selling One's Faith (٣

:Fadhl Ibn Rabi' relates

Once, Sharik Ibn Abdullah Nakhai' arrived before Mahdi Abbasi, the third Abbasid Caliph, who said to him: You must accept to perform one of these three tasks: Become .a judge in the judicial setup, educate my children, or eat my food

Sharik thought that teaching the Caliph's children was a tough proposition; becoming a judge was tougher; however, eating the Caliph's food appeared to be simple and so he accepted the third option. Mahdi instructed the cook to prepare various kinds of .delicacies which were then brought before Sharik, who satiated himself with them

The kitchen attendant said to Mahdi: O Caliph! This sheikh, after consuming these (delicacies, shall never attain salvation.(٢

:Fadhl Ibn Rabi' states

By God! After consuming that food, not only did Sharik began to increase his association with the Bani Abbas and agree to educate their children, but also consented to become the judge. Once, Sharik's pay-slip, which was used to collect

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١- Shanidanihaa-e-Taareekh, p. ٢۶; Mahajjah al-Baydha, v. ٣, p. ٢٢.

٢- لَیسَ یُفلحُ الشّیخُ بَعدَ هَذِهِ الاَکلَهِ اَبَداً

his salary from the treasury, was handed over to him. When he approached the treasurer for his pay he insisted that he be paid immediately in cash. Noting his insistence, the treasurer said to him: You have not sold linen or an expensive garment .that you insist so vehemently on receiving immediate cash payment

Hearing this, Sharik retorted: By God! I have sold something that is more precious (than linen – I have sold my religion!(١

The Blessing is in the Bread (۴

(The Blessing is in the Bread(٢

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has said: Regard bread with great esteem for most of the entities that exist between the Arsh (Throne) and the earth have some form of contribution in making and preparing it. He (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) then said: Previous to you, there lived a Prophet by the name of Daniyal. One day he gave a loaf of bread to a pauper, who, upon receiving it frowned and flung it in the middle of the road, saying: What can I do with a loaf of .bread, which has no worth

When Daniyal witnessed this he raised his hands towards the skies and said: Honour !bread with a lofty rank

Due to that reprehensible act of that person, God withheld the rains from pouring and prohibited the earth from bringing forth its vegetation. Circumstances became so .adverse that people resorted to cannibalism, and began eating one another

Two women, each of them possessing two children, decided amongst themselves that one

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١- Pand-e-Taareekh, v. ۴, p. ٨۶; Muruj al-Dhahab, v. ٣, p. ٣٢٠.

٢- The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has said: اللَّهُمَّ بـاَرِك لَنَا فِي الْخُبز and also اَكرِمُوا الخُبز

day the child of one woman would be eaten while the next day it would be the turn of the child of the other. On that day one child was consumed; however the next day, the mother of the other child whose turn it was to be eaten, refused to give her child. This led to a great dispute between them until eventually they approached Daniyal and placed their issue before him.

When he came to realise the condition of the people, he prayed to God, Who then opened the doors of His mercy upon them.(١)

5) The Food of Death

After the death of Mu'tasim Abbasi (d. ٢٢٧ AH), his son Harun, titled Waathiq Billaah Abbasi, became the Caliph. It has been recorded that he was immensely fond of sexual intercourse, and so requested his doctor to provide him a concoction that would serve to increase his sexual strength.

Excessive sexual intercourse wastes away the body and I do not want your body to be wasted, the doctor advised. But Waathiq insisted: You have got to prepare it for me.

The doctor, seeing no alternative, set about to prepare the concoction; he ordered meat of wild beasts to be boiled seven times in vinegar that was procured from wine. This meat was to be consumed in a measure equivalent to the weight of ۵۴ peas, after drinking wine.

However, Waathiq consumed more than the prescribed quantity and before long was afflicted with dropsy. The doctors were unanimous in their opinion that his stomach would have to be split open

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١- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, v. ١, p. ٢٧۶; Safinah al-Bihar, v. ١, p. ٣٧۵.

.after which he would have to be placed within a furnace heated by means of olive oil

They then set about putting their suggestion into execution and, despite his repeated requests, refrained from providing him water for ۳ hours till large boils manifested .themselves upon his body, whereupon he was taken out of the furnace

Do not place me in the furnace again for I shall surely die, he beseeched, but once again they put him inside. When the boils burst they pulled him out of the furnace in a .state that his entire body had turned black; he died shortly afterwards

A cloth was placed over his dead body, and his corpse lay forgotten and unattended as the people soon became occupied in pledging allegiance to his brother Mutawakkil. (Thus, in the year ۲۳۲ AH, at the age of ۳۴, he succumbed to his food of death.(۱

Pride .۶۴

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ

Know that this world's life is only sport and play and gaiety and boasting among“ (yourself”(۲

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

لمثقال ذره من صاحب تقوى و يقين اءفضل من مل ء الاءرض من المغترين

An atom’s weight of good deed by a person, possessing piety and firm faith is better“ than good deeds that are so numerous so as to fill the earth, by one, who is (conceited.”(۳

Short Explanation

A conceited person is (in reality) underprivileged in this world and would be left cheated in the hereafter. One ought

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۱- Tatimmah al-Muntaha, p. ۲۳۱.

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hadeed (۵۷), vs. ۲۰.

۳- Jaame' Al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۳, pg. ۵.

not to be proud and conceited with respect to one's wealth, family, soundness of health, leadership, authority and the likes of these, for all of these are transitory and .shall not remain forever

Man, as a result of possessing a good life or attaining some of his personal desires, should never become conceited; at times it so happens that these themselves .become causes of adversity and calamity for man

If one happens to perform numerous acts of worship or develops a fear of God or becomes repentant (over past misdeeds), it is better for him to thank God for having granted him this state of mind than to receive praise from people. This is because praise and extolment of people is a scourge which brings about pride, conceit and .(heedlessness (towards God

On the Day of Judgment, the greatest loser and the most remorseful of all would be (one, who was proud and conceited (in this world).(١

The Inner Pride (١

Some of the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) were seen to be constantly praising a particular person in his (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) presence. One day they saw him while they were with the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and pointing to him said: .That is the person whom we used to praise

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) looked at the person and said: I am witnessing on his face a satanic blackness. As the

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.Tadhkerah al-Haqaaiq -١

person came near and greeted him (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said to him: I place you under the oath of God; tell me, did you not say to yourself: "Amongst the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) there is none, who is superior "?to and better than me

.The person confessed: Yes, the thought did pass my mind

In this manner the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), by means) (of his inner vision, informed him of his inner conceit and pride.)(۱

Pride with Respect to one's Wealth and Children (۲

Aas Ibn Wail was an irreligious person, who used to ridicule the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny). He was the one who had referred to him (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) by means of that outrageous title of abtar - meaning .one without a son and lineage

He left behind an equally unworthy son by the name of Amr Ibn Aas, who was the mastermind behind the policies of artifice and deception of Mua'wiyah against Imam .(Ali (peace be upon him

One of the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) :reports

Aas Ibn Wail owed me some money and so, approaching him I sought my money from him. However, he refused saying: I shall not give you your money. I said to him: In that case I shall collect my dues from

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.Shanidanihaa-e-Taareekh, pg. ۳۷۸, Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۶, pg. ۲۹۸ -۱

.you in the hereafter

In the hereafter, if at all it exists, I would have numerous children and great riches; if I go there and you too happen to come there, I shall return your money to you! He replied with an air of supreme arrogance and conceit.

God revealed the following verses to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny):

أَفَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِى كَفَرَ بِآيَاتِنَا وَقَالَ لَأُوتَيَنَّ مَالًا وَوَلَدًا

أَطَّلَعَ الْغَيْبَ أَمِ اتَّخَذَ عِنْدَ الرَّحْمَٰنِ عَهْدًا

كَلَّا ۚ سَنَكْتُبُ مَا يَقُولُ وَنَمُدُّ لَهُ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ مَدًّا

"Have you, then, seen him who disbelieves in Our communications and says: I shall certainly be given wealth and children? Has he gained knowledge of the unseen, or made a covenant with the Beneficent? By no means! We write down what he says, and We will lengthen to him the length of the chastisement." (1), (2)

3) The Proud Champion

Once, there was a champion wrestler, who by utilising his great skills and defeating all his opponents, had come to acquire great fame for himself.

His overwhelming strength and power filled him with such pride and conceit that one day, looking towards the heavens, he called out: O Lord! Now arrange to send down Jibraeel so that I can test my strength against him, for on this earth there is none that can stand up against my strength.

Before long God afflicted him with weakness and frailty, and in order to crush his vanity, reduced him to such a state of penury that he was forced to live in the ruins of dilapidated houses.

١ - Holy Qur'an, ch. Maryam (١٩), vs. ٧٧-٧٩ .أَ فَرَأَيتَ الَّذِى ... مِنَ الْعَذَابِ مَدّاً

٢ - Hikayaat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ٥, pg. ١٥٧, Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۶, pg. ٢٠۴.

So overcome was he with weakness that one day when he placed his head upon a brick to rest, a mouse darted over his face and began nibbling his toes, but he did not possesses the strength to even pull his legs away from the nibbling rodent.

A holy person, who happened to pass by him, observed his state and said: God has made one of his smallest soldiers to become dominant over you in order that you realise your mistake and repent over your conceited behaviour. God, in addition to being The Patient, is also The Concerned and if you seek forgiveness, He shall surely grant you soundness of health.(۱)

۴) The Scholar of Arabic Grammar

Once, there was a person who had studied and acquired such immense mastery over Arabic grammar that people referred to him as the 'scholar of Arabic grammar'.

One day he boarded a ship and, since he prided himself on his knowledge of Arabic grammar, turning to the captain of the ship, asked: Have you studied Arabic grammar? No, replied the captain of the ship. Hearing this, the scholar criticised: Then you have wasted half of your life!

This criticism greatly hurt and disturbed the captain, but he kept quiet and did not say anything. The ship continued on its way when suddenly a storm struck as a result of which it found itself caught in the midst of a whirlpool and was on the verge of sinking.

Observing this, the captain, who knew how to swim, asked the scholar: Do you

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۱- Rangaarang, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۱۱.

know to swim? The scholar replied: No. Hearing this, the captain remarked: Then your entire life is about to be wasted, for the ship is about to sink and you cannot swim!

It was then that the scholar became aware of his conceit and came to realise that the best knowledge is that which man utilises to eliminate the vices that exist within him so that he does not drown in the sea of pride and vanity.(١)

The Arrogance of Abu Jahl (٥

One night Abu Jahl, the most obstinate enemy of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), was circumambulating the Ka'bah in the company of Walid Ibn Mughirah, and while engaged in the act, began to speak about him (peace be upon him and his holy progeny).

Abu Jahl said: By God! He speaks the truth.

Walid rebuked: Keep quiet! How do you speak such a thing?

Abu Jahl replied: We knew him, from his childhood, to be a truthful and trustworthy person. How could he, after having grown up and his intellect having matured, become a liar and a traitor?

Walid said: If this is the case, then why don't you testify to his truthfulness and accept Islam? Abu Jahl said: Do you desire the womenfolk of the Quraish to say that I, Abu Jahl, have submitted myself out of fear of defeat. By the idols Lat and Uzza, I shall never follow him.

Due to this pride and haughtiness, God revealed the following verse(٢):

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَٰهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ

١- Daastaan-ha-e-Mathnawi, vol. ١, pg. ٥٢.

٢- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Jaathiyah (٤٥), vs. ٢٣. خَتَمَ عَلىَ سمَعِهِ وَ قَلبِهِ وَ جَعَلَ عَلىَ بَصَرِهِ غِشاَوَةً

وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَجَعَلَ عَلَىٰ بَصَرِهِ غِشَاوَةً فَمَنْ يَهْدِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ اللَّهِ ۚ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

Have you then considered him who takes his low desire for his god, and Allah has" made him err having knowledge and has set a seal upon his ear and his heart and put (a covering upon his eye."(1)

Anger .65

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

يا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لا تَتَوَلَّوْا قَوْماً غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ

(O you who believe! Do not make friends with a people with whom Allah is wroth."(2)"

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

الْغَضَبُ يُفْسِدُ الْإِيمَانَ كَمَا يُفْسِدُ الْخَلُّ الْعَسَلَ

(Anger corrupts faith just as vinegar corrupts honey."(3)"

Short Explanation

One of the harmful diseases, which possesses numerous ill-effects and also causes aggravation of the nerves, is anger. This is especially so if it creates a feeling of .vengefulness and malice, for then its harm becomes twofold

Anger that manifests itself while battling the infidels or opposing someone who seeks to inflict harm upon one's reputation, family, etc., is not only regarded as .commendable by religion and intellect, but is also a sign of courage and valour

But in instances other than the above, anger is from the whisperings of Shaitan and a key to all evils. It destroys intellect and forces changes in the physical and mental disposition of man by altering the colour of the face and the eyes, and bringing about mental aggravation and stress; it is also accompanied by other effects such as abuses, taunts, violence, ridicule, murder and other similar

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۱- ۲۷ .Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol ۵, pg. ۸۵, Tafseer Iraqi, vol. ۲۵, pg

۲- ۱۳ .Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Mumtahanah (۶۰), vs

۳- ۲۸۸ .Jaame' Al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۱, pg

.acts

It is better to stay away from all such things that induce anger, and repel it by (practicing patience and forbearance.(1

Dhul Kifl (1

When the life of Prophet Elisha was nearing its end, he decided it was time to appoint his successor. With this in mind, he gathered the people and said: Whosoever from amongst you undertakes to perform three things, I shall make him my successor: To .fast during the days, to remain awake during the nights and abstain from anger

A youth by the name of U'waidiya, who apparently did not possess a great status in the eyes of the people, stood up and said: I am willing to accept the undertaking. The next day when Prophet Elisha repeated his words, once again it was only this youth who stood up to accept the offer, and so Prophet Elisha appointed him as his .successor; shortly afterwards he departed from the world

(God granted Prophethood to the youth, who was none other than Prophet Dhul Kifl.(2

Once, Shaitaan resolved to make him angry and thus cause him to break his pledge, and so appointing a satan by the name of Abyadh for this task, commanded him: Go .and make him angry

Dhul Kifl would usually remain awake during the nights and sleep a little during the day. Abyadh waited till he had gone to sleep; then, approaching him, he shouted: I have been oppressed and have suffered injustice. Grant me justice from my !oppressor

Dhul Kifl said: Go and bring the person before me. The

.Ihyaa al-Quloob, pg. ٥۶ -١

.He was one of the prophets and lived after the period of Prophet Sulaiman -٢

satan said: I shall not move from here since I know he shall not come with me. Giving him his ring, Dhul Kifl asked him to take it to the oppressor and ask him to come in his .presence

Abyadh took possession of the ring and departed. The next day arriving again, he wailed: I have been oppressed; the oppressor disregarded your ring and refused to !come with me

Dhul Kifl's doorkeeper said: Let him rest, for neither did he sleep yesterday nor has he slept the whole of last night. But Abyadh insisted: I shall not let him sleep; I have been .oppressed

Hearing this, Dhul Kifl wrote a letter and handed it to Abyadh so that he could show it .to the oppressor who would then present himself before Dhul Kifl

On the third day, no sooner had Dhul Kifl closed his eyes when Abyadh appeared again and woke him up to state that the person still refused to come. This time Dhul Kifl took hold of Abyadh's hand and, without any sign of anger, set off in the sun to talk .to the person

Realizing he had failed in his task of making Dhul Kifl angry, Abyadh slipped away from (him and took to flight.(١

?Who is the Strong One (٢

Once, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) happened to be passing by a locality when he noticed a large crowd. In the midst of the people stood a strong and powerful man, who was exhibiting his strength by lifting a gigantic

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.Taareekh-e-Anbiya, vol. ٢, pg. ١٩۶ -١

stone, which the people referred to as 'stone of the strong ones' and 'weight of the champions'. The spectators, visibly impressed over his display of strength, were seen .complimenting and praising him

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) questioned: Why have these people gathered here? Some people, informing him of the weight-lifting acts of .the champion, said: A person is displaying his strength

Hearing this, he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: Should I inform you, who (in reality) is a strong person and a champion? A champion is one, who, when someone abuses him, does not get enraged, exhibits tolerance, prevails over his ego (and gains dominance over the satan of his self.(١

One Advice (٣

Once, a person approached the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and said: Impart me knowledge and teach me the rulings of religion. He .(peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: Go and refrain from getting enraged

The man said: This very sentence shall suffice for me, and then proceeded to return .to his tribe

When he reached his tribe he observed that dispute had arisen amongst them and having armed themselves, they stood facing each other ready for battle. Observing this, the man too put on his battle-dress ready to join his friends for battle when suddenly he recollected the words of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his .holy progeny) asking him to abstain from anger

Dropping his weapons, he proceeded

Iblees Naameh, vol. ١, pg. ٧۵; Majmua-e-Warraam, vol. ٢, pg. ١٠. The late Sheikh - ١ Saduq has reported in his book Ma'ani al-Akhbaar, that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) had stated three things in connection with a person,

who is a champion – one of them being that when he is enraged, his anger does not .distance him from truthful and correct speech

towards the opposition and began to reason with them: Battle and war shall not yield !anything. I shall pay you from my own wealth whatever you desire

Realizing the truth of his words, they acquiesced: We are more deserving of .disregarding and ignoring the differences that have taken place

And thus, by this advice of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), (a major conflict was averted.(١

The Imam (peace be upon him) and the Slave (۴

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) had sent his servant out to perform a task for him. When a long time had passed and he had not returned, the Imam (peace be upon him) set out in search for him. After searching for a while, the Imam (peace be upon him) found him asleep.

Without the slightest exhibition of anger, the Imam (peace be upon him) sat down near his head and began to fan him till he woke up from his sleep. After he had woken up, he (peace be upon him) said to him: By God! It does not befit you that you sleep during the night as well as during the day. You ought to sleep during the night, but (work for us during the day.(٢

Bad Disposition and the Servants (۵

Abdullah Ibn Taahir, after the death of his brother Talhah (d. ٢١٣ A.H.), was appointed the governor of Khorasan. He continued to rule over it till the time of Al-Waathiq Billah and, after seventeen years of governorship, died in the year ٢٣٠ A.H. at the age of .forty eight

:Abdullah Ibn Taahir relates

One day

.Shanidanihaa-e-Taareekh, pg. ٣٠۵, Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۵, pg. ٢٩٣ -١

.Muntahal Aa’maal, vol. ٢, pg.١٣٠ -٢

when I was with the Abbasid Caliph, none of the servants were seen to be around. Observing this, the Caliph called out: O' Slave! O' Slave! A Turkish slave suddenly appeared and discourteously said to the Caliph:

The servants too have important tasks to do for themselves such as eating, using the lavatory, performing ablutions, offering prayers and sleeping; just as we go out for some important task you raise your voice and holler out O' Slave! ' Slave! How long will you go on saying: O' Slave?

Abdullah says: Hearing this outburst, the Caliph lowered his head; I was convinced that the moment the Caliph raised his head he would order the slave to be beheaded!

However, when the Caliph raised his head after a few moments, he said to me: O' Abdullah! When the masters conduct themselves in a good manner, the slaves become ill-mannered; (however) we cannot become ill-mannered in order that the slaves behave in a good manner (Meaning that the slaves misuse the patience and tolerance of their masters).(١)

۶۶. Backbiting

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

وَ لا يَغْتَبْ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضاً

"...nor let some of you, backbite others"(٢)

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said:

إن الغيبه أشد من الزنا

"Surely, backbiting is worse than fornication"(٣)

Short Explanation

Backbiting is prohibited for every Muslim and one who indulges in it is a sinner.

Whenever backbiting about a person has taken place, and he comes to know of it, .forgiveness ought to be sought from him

Backbiting eats away the good

p: ۳۵

۱- Lataaif al-Tawaaif, pg. ۹۴.

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hujaraat (۴۹), vs. ۱۲.

۳- Jaame' Al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۳۰۲.

deeds just as fire eats away the fire-wood. Backbiting could occur for several reasons: out of envy, for beautifying one's speech, for mitigating one's anger, due to hatred towards the person, and the likes of these - all of which are detrimental for the soul, and shall cause a person to face numerous punishments on the Day of Judgment.(١)

They Stopped the Backbiters (١

Once during the time of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), a person happened to pass by a group that was seated. Seeing the person pass by, one of them said: I harbour enmity towards him for the sake of God. The others retorted: By God! You have surely uttered an evil utterance! We shall inform him of what you have stated. And they did just that.

Coming to know of this talk about him, the person approached the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and complained to him about that person's statement. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) summoned him and sought to know if he had uttered such words. The man replied: Yes, I did say it.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) asked: Why do you possess animosity towards him? He replied: I am his neighbour and am fully aware of his state. By God! I have never seen him offer any other prayer save the obligatory ones!

The other man spoke out: O' Prophet of God! Ask him if he

١- Tadhkerah al-Haqaaiq, pg. ۴٨.

has ever seen me delay my obligatory prayers, or perform ablutions incorrectly or not ?perform my ruku' and sujood correctly

When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) asked, the other person replied in the negative, but then continued: By God! With the exception of the month of Ramadhan, in which every person, whether pious or a sinner, observes !fasts, I have never seen him fasting

The other person countered: O' Prophet of God! Ask him if he has ever seen me not fasting in the month of Ramadhan, or disregarded any of the religious rulings ?associated with it

When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) enquired, the person again replied in the negative, but then added: By God! With the exception of the zakat, which every person – pious or otherwise, does make it a point to pay, I !have never seen him give any alms to a pauper or a fakir

Defending himself, the other person again said to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny): Ask him if he has ever seen me pay out the zakaat less than what was due upon me, or haggle with those who had come to collect it from .me? When asked, the man said: No

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), then turning to that man, said: Go away from my presence, for it is highly probable that he may be better than and superior to

(you.(١

The Punishment for Backbiting, on the Day of Judgment (٢

:Sheikh Bahaai (may the mercy (of God) be upon him) says

Once it so happened that in a prominent gathering, in my absence, I became the topic of conversation. I came to know that one of those present in the gathering, although claiming to be my friend was not truthful in his claim, began backbiting about and :speaking ill of me; fully heedless of the verse in which God says

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ ۖ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبْ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا ۚ أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَحِيمٌ

nor let some of you backbite others. Does one of you like to eat the flesh of his..." (dead brother? But you abhor it."(٢

Later when he came to know that I had become aware of his act, he wrote me a lengthy letter in which he expressed his repentance over the deed and sought .forgiveness from me

:Replying to his letter, I wrote

May God reward you for the gift that you sent for me! This is because your gift shall !cause the scale of my good deeds to become heavier on the Day of Judgment

It has been narrated that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: "On the Day of Judgment, a person shall be brought forth for the reckoning of his deeds; his good deeds shall be placed in one pan of the balance while his evil deeds would be placed

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.I'lm-e-Akhlaaq-e-Islami, vol. ٢, pg. ٣٩٩ -١

وَ لا يَغْتَبْ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضاً أَ يُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتاً فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hujaraat, vs. ١٢ -٢

in the other and it would be observed that the pan of evil deeds was heavier than that of the good deeds. At this juncture, a sheet of paper would be placed upon his good deeds as a result of which, the pan containing his good deeds would become heavier .than the one containing his sins

Astonished, the person would ask: 'O' Lord! All the good deeds that I possessed had been placed in the pan, so what is this sheet of paper?' I have never performed this .good act

He would be informed: 'This is in exchange for those evils that were spoken about` ".'you but which you did not possess

Sheikh Bahaai continues in his letter): This tradition compels me to thank you for the) .gift that you have presented to me

Although, had you acted in this manner or even worse, in front of me, let me assure you that you would not have witnessed any response from me except forgiveness, pardon, friendship and faithfulness. The years of life that remain are much too precious to waste in attempting to punish individuals for their deeds; rather, it ought to be spent in reflecting over that which has been lost and attempting to make (amends for that which has passed.(١

Impediment for the Rains (٣

One year, the Bani Israel were afflicted with famine and drought. When Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) had offered the prayers for rain on numerous occasions and yet there was no sign of rains, God revealed to him (peace

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.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۵, pg. ۱۶۰; Kashkool, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۹۶ -۱

be upon him): I have not answered your prayers because of one person from amongst you, who constantly engages in backbiting and calumny.

When he (peace be upon him) asked: O' Lord! Who is that person?, God revealed: O' Musa! How can I backbite when I command you to refrain from backbiting? Tell all the people to seek forgiveness in order that I answer their prayers.

When all the people had sought forgiveness, God showered them with His mercy in the form of rains.(1)

In another tradition it has been reported that the person had backbitten about Musa (peace be upon him), who then requested God to reveal the person's identity to him. Hearing this God said: I consider carrying of tales to be abhorrent and reprehensible, and yet you desire that I should indulge in it Myself?

4) A Thousand Lashings

Once Haroon al-Rashid, received some distinguished, classy and pricey garments as gifts, which he gifted to his (Shiite) minister Ali Ibn Yaqteen; amongst them was a cuirass of fur and golden embroidery that, due to is grandeur and magnificence, resembled the garments worn by emperors.

Ali Ibn Yaqteen sent those garments to Imam Kadhim (peace be upon him) along with numerous other riches. The Imam (peace be upon him) however, returned the cuirass back to him and wrote him a letter advising: Keep it with you and do not take it out of your house; a time shall come when you shall be in need of it.

A few days later Ali Ibn Yaqteen happened to

1- Jaame' Al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۷۷.

become infuriated with one of his slaves, and had him dismissed from service. This slave presented himself before Haroon al-Rashid and complained: Ali Ibn Yaqteen believes in the Imamate of Musa Ibn Ja’far (peace be upon him) and sends his khums to him (peace be upon him) every year. Even the cuirass that you had gifted to him !was sent to Musa Ibn Ja'far (peace be upon him) on such and such day

Haroon was furious when he heard this and said: I must get to the bottom of this mystery, and then ordered that Ali Ibn Yaqteen be immediately summoned before .him

When he had arrived, Haroon hollered: What have you done with the cuirass that I ?had given to you

Ali Ibn Yaqteen replied: It is in the house. I have wrapped it up in a piece of cloth and .every morning and evening I open it for the sake of blessedness

.Haroon ordered: Bring it to me right away

The cuirass is wrapped in a piece of cloth inside such and such trunk, which is located in such and such room, Ali Ibn Yaqteen directed one of his slaves, and asked him to .bring it to him. The slave did as he was told and brought the cuirass

When Haroon observed that the cuirass given by him was perfumed and wrapped in a piece of cloth, his fury subsided and he said: “Take this back to your house; ”henceforth I shall never pay heed to anything is spoken against you

He then gave

numerous presents to Ali Ibn Yaqteen. As for the slave, he ordered that he be subjected to a thousand lashes; hardly had he been lashed five hundred times when (he died.(۱

The Telltale Slave (۵

A person wished to purchase a slave and so set out for the slave market. There, a slave was shown to him and told: This slave possesses no flaw except that he is a .telltale. The person agreed and, purchasing the slave, brought him to his house

After a few days had passed, this slave approached his master's wife and said to her: "Your husband does not love you anymore and intends to take another woman as a wife for himself. If you wish, I could cast a magic charm on him so as to spellbind him for you; however, for that I would need you to procure a few strands of his hair for .me

.How can I bring his hair for you?, the wife asked

The slave said: When he is asleep, cut some of his hair by means of a razor and bring !them to me so that I can do something by means of which he begins to love you

He then approached the husband and said to him: Your wife has found a paramour for .herself and desires to kill you, so beware

The man feigned himself to be asleep; observing this, his wife entered the room with a razor in hand. The husband, thinking that his wife had come to kill him, jumped up from his place and

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.Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۱, pg. ۵۲; Kashkool Bahraani, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۳۲ -۱

.killed her

.Coming to know this incident, the wife's relatives came and murdered the husband

When the husband's tribe was informed of this act, they rose up in arms against the wife's tribe which led to violence, battle, killing and bloodshed between the two tribes; this enmity and confrontation between the two tribes continued to exist for a very (long time!(۱

Obscene Language .۶۷

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ لا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْواً

And do not abuse those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest exceeding the limits" (they should abuse Allah"(۲

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

إن الله لا يحب الفحش و التفحش

(Surely, Allah does not like obscene language and abusiveness"(۳"

Short Explanation

Utterance of vulgar, reprehensible and dirty things is referred to as obscene language. One, who speaks obscene language lacks modesty and shame, and .possesses a tongue that is filthy and impure

Obscene language is prohibited and its evil effects are numerous. It ought to be realized that evil acts manifested by a person externally, is indicative of evil that exists .within him internally

God does not approve of obscene language and hence a (true) Mu'min can never be foulmouthed. Obscene language is an offshoot hypocrisy and Shaitaan, by means of

.this vice, seeks to develop a friend for himself

Of course, there are ways by means of which man can protect himself from using obscene language such as binding himself by means of vows and oaths, staying away from foulmouthed individuals, engaging in the remembrance

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.Shanidanihaa-e-Taareekh, pg. ۳۰۲; Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۸۹ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Ana'am (۶), vs. ۱۰۸ -۲

.Jaame' Al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۱, pg. ۳۱۴ -۳

(of God, recitation of lofty supplications, ethical poems and the like.(1)

The Imam's Reaction (1

:A'mr Ibn Nu'man Ju'fi relates

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) had a companion, who used to constantly accompany him (peace be upon him) wherever he (peace be upon him) would go, and .(never separate from him (peace be upon him

Once when the Imam (peace be upon him) was travelling to a place called Hadhaain, .this person together with his slave, also joined the Imam

In the course of this journey, the person looked around but saw that his servant was not to be seen. Three times he looked for him but failed to locate him. On the fourth try he found him; as soon as his eyes fell upon him, he yelled out in anger: O' Son of an ?adulteress! Where have you been

As soon as these words reached the ears of the Imam (peace be upon him), he slapped his forehead and said: Subhanallah! You have ascribed an evil act to his mother! All along I had regarded you as a pious individual, however now I have .realized that you have no piety

May I be made your ransom! But his mother is of the polytheists (and so there is .nothing wrong in the allegation), said the man, trying to justify his statement

The Imam (peace be upon him) remarked: Do you not know that every community !has its own customs of marriage, which need to be respected. Go away from me

The narrator of this tradition comments: From that day onwards, I

.Ihyaa al-Quloob, pg. ۶۵ -۱

never saw him in the company of the Imam (peace be upon him) for as long as they were alive.(1)

2) Usaamah's Reply

Usaamah Ibn Zaid was one of those who had been set free by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), and about whom the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: He is of those individuals, whom I am particularly fond of and is one of the pious ones from amongst you. Just before his (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) death, he (peace be upon him) appointed Usaamah, despite his young age, as the commander of the army.

It has been reported that one day Usaamah was engaged in prayers in the Prophet's Mosque near the grave of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny). In the meantime, since a person had died, the people approached Marwaan Ibn Hakam, the ruler of Medinah, to lead the funeral prayers for the deceased. He arrived, led the prayers and was on the way out when he observed Usaamah standing near the door of the house of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) still engaged in his prayers. Realizing that he had not participated in the funeral prayers that he had led, a greatly offended Marwan spoke out: You want the people to see you engaged in prayers, isn't it? He then followed this up with a tirade of abuses and obscene language.

After

۱- أَ ماَ عَلِمْتَ اَنَّ لِكُلِّ قَومٍ نِكاَحاً

completing his prayers, Usaamah came up to Marwaan and said: You have hurt me and used obscene and abusive language towards me. I have heard the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) say: "God abhors a person, who uses (obscene and abusive language.(۱

Satan in the Company of Those Using Foul Language (۳

One day the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and Abu Bakr were seated together when a person came up to Abu Bakr and began abusing and .reviling him

When the person had finished his outburst Abu Bakr, for the sake of defending .himself, spoke out and in the process began to abuse the person

The moment Abu Bakr began using foul language, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), who till then had remained a mute spectator to the .incident, suddenly got up from his place in order to distance himself from him

As he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) moved away, he commented: O' Abu Bakr! When that person was abusing you, an angel of God, was answering the person in your defense, but the moment you began abusing him, that angel left you and his place was taken over by the Shaitaan; and I am not of the persons, who would sit in a (gathering in which the Shaitaan is present.(۲

Conduct (۴

A person approached Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) and said: Your such and such cousin was talking about you, but whatever he spoke was nothing except for abuses .and obscene language

The

.Paighambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۹۴ -۱

٢- Iblees Naameh, vol. ١, pg. ٧٣; Ihyaa al-U’loom, vol. ٣, pg. ٣٧٠.

Imam (peace be upon him) said to his slave-girl: Bring me some water for ablution. He then performed the ablution and stood up for prayers.

The narrator said: I thought to myself that the Imam (peace be upon him) would curse the person.

When the Imam (peace be upon him) had concluded is two-raka'h prayer, he beseeched: O' Lord! It was my right (which he had transgressed) and I have forgiven him (for his invectives and abuses). Your munificence and benefaction is much more than mine, so forgive him and do not chastise him for his conduct.

The narrator says: Seeing this compassion of the Imam (peace be upon him), I was overcome with astonishment and amazement.(١)

۵) Ibn Muqaffa'

Ibn Muqaffa' was an erudite and intelligent person, who had translated several academic and scholarly books into Arabic. His superior acuity and excellence had caused him to become conceited such that, in public gatherings, he would end up belittling others and at times, even resort to speaking dirty and vulgar things.

One of those, who found themselves the object of his offensiveness, was Sufiyaan Ibn Mua'wiyah, who had been appointed the governor of Basrah on the part of Mansur Dawaaniqi, the second Abbasid Caliph.

Sufiyaan had a disproportionately large nose and whenever Ibn Muqaffa' would arrive before him, he would call out loudly: Salutations to both of you (meaning Sufiyaan and his large nose).

At times, he would humiliate him by making references to his mother; one day, in a gathering of people, he addressed him in a

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١- Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ٢, pg. ١٢٧; Miskaah al-Anwaar.

loud voice by saying: O' Son of a lecherous woman! In other gatherings, he would hurt .him by various forms of humiliating and abusive language

.Sufiyaan constantly awaited an opportunity to pay him back

It so happened that Abdullah Ibn Ali initiated an uprising against his nephew and the Abbasid Caliph – Mansur Dawaaniqi. Mansur dispatched Abu Muslim Khorasani to Basrah to quell the rebellion. In the battle than ensued, Abu Muslim emerged victorious and Abdullah Ibn Ali took to flight, eventually taking shelter with his .brothers Sulaiman and Isa

They interceded on his behalf before Mansur and requested that they be pardoned; Mansur accepted their intercession for Abdullah Ibn Ali and pardoned him. The uncles of Mansur returned to Basrah and approached Ibn Muqaffa' so that he could write for .(them the official letter of pardon (for Abdullah Ibn Ali

Arrogant that he was, he wrote in the letter of pardon: In the event that Mansur Dawaaniqi deceives his uncle Abdullah Ibn Ali and troubles him, all his wealth would be considered as having become the property of the people, all his slaves would be considered free and all Muslims would be considered as free from their pledge of .allegiance to him

When the letter of pardon was brought before Mansur for signing, he was immensely .disturbed; while he refrained from signing it, he covertly ordered its writer to be killed

Sufiyaan, who had for long, been exasperated by the utterances of Ibn Muqaffa', ,ordered him to be taken into a room. Arriving before him

he taunted: Do you recall the abuses and obscene language that you had used for my ?mother and me

He then ordered a furnace to be lit up and the thirty three year old Ibn Muqaffa', as (per the orders of Mansur Dawaaniqi, was hurled into the flames and killed.(١

Poverty .۶۸

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

الشَّيْطانُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ

(Shaitaan threatens you with poverty"(٢"

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has said

تحفه المومن فی الدنیا الفقر

(Poverty is a Mu'min's gift in the world"(٣"

Short Explanation

Usually, those belonging to the lower class suffer from indigence and their numbers are large too. Since they are not contented and lack patience - hunger, thirst, lack of accommodation, inability of their children to tolerate penury and various sicknesses, brings about helplessness in their lives as a result of which they tend to extend their .hands before others for assistance

If poverty persists and a person lacks the ability to endure it, he may occasionally get .(inclined towards sins and even kufr (disbelief

A poor person must rely on God, abstain from avarice, be contented and must exhibit patience to preserve his esteem and reputation, since the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has said: The best of this ummah are the indigent ones and they shall enter paradise before everyone else. Poverty is my glory;

paradise is desirous of the indigent ones and they are the kings of the inmates of paradise.(۴)

1) The Poor Pious Person

Sa'di relates:

I heard that a poor pious person, due to extreme poverty,

p: ۴۹

1- Dunyaa-e-Jawaan, pg. ۶۴; Jawaan, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۱.

2- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Baqarah (۲), vs. ۲۶۸.

3- Jaame' Al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۸۳.

4- Ihyaa Al-Quloob, pg. ۸۹.

was in great adversity. Piece by piece he would repeatedly stitch his torn garment and for serenity of mind would say: With dry bread and a patched woolen garment I shall content myself, my heavy burden I shall endure but not the burden of someone's obligation.

A person said to him: Why do you sit here? Do you not know that in the city there lives an honourable and magnanimous gentleman, who has resolved to help the needy ones and seeks the happiness of the pained ones? Go to him and inform him of your state for if he comes to know of your condition he shall provide you with food and new clothes and make you happy!

The pious person retorted: Keep quiet! Stitching patches repeatedly on one's clothes and exhibiting endurance is better than approaching a rich person and seeking clothes from him. Indeed, entering paradise as a result of a neighbour's intercession is equivalent to the tortures of the fire of hell.(١)

٢) The Destitute and Retirement

An old blind man once came up to Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) and sought some monetary assistance from him (peace be upon him). Imam Ali (peace be upon him) turning to those around him asked: Who is this person and how is his state?

They replied: O' Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him)! He is a Christian; and spoke in a manner which conveyed that he should not be given any assistance.

Noticing this, the Imam (peace be upon him) exclaimed: What? Till such time

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١- Hikaayat-ha-e-Gulistan, pg. ١٥١.

that he had the strength to work, you extracted work from him, and now that he has turned frail, you leave him uncared-for! It appears that when he was strong, he used to work and serve.

Having said this, the Imam (peace be upon him) ordered: He should be given a pension from the Public Treasury.(1)

3) The Benefits of Assisting a Poor

One year, Abdullah Ibn Mubarak resolved to go to Makkah for Hajj. One day, as he was passing through a lane, he suddenly witnessed a woman, who bent down, picked up a dead and putrid fowl from the ground and hid it under her cloak!

Abdullah said to her: O' Lady! Why have you picked up this fowl?

The woman replied: Need and adversity have compelled me to resort to such an act!

When Abdullah heard this, he took the indigent woman to his house and handed her the five hundred dinars that he had set aside for Hajj.

That year, he did not go for Hajj. When the other pilgrims returned after having performed their pilgrimage, he proceeded to welcome them. As soon as they set their eyes upon him, they said to him: We have seen you performing the rites of Hajj at A'rafaat, Mina and other places.

Astonished, Abdullah approached the Imam (peace be upon him) and narrated the entire episode to him, whereupon he (peace be upon him) clarified: God had created an angel, in your likeness, to perform the pilgrimage of the House of God (in your place).(2)

4) The Neighbour of Sayyid Jawaad

Sayyid Jawaad A'amoli, a jurist

۱- Baa Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Kuneem, pg. ۳۰; Tahdheeb, vol. ۶, pg. ۲۹۲.

۲- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۱۳; L'aali al-Akhbaar, pg. ۲۵۳.

:and the author of the book Miftaah al-Karaamah, narrates

One night as I was having my meals, someone knocked at the door. Opening the door, I saw it was the servant of Sayyid Bahr al-U'loom. He said to me: The dinner of Sayyid Bahr al-U'loom is ready and he awaits you.

I accompanied the servant to the house of Sayyid Bahr al-U'loom; as soon as I arrived in his presence, he said: Do you not fear God that you tend to be so negligent?

I said humbly: O' Teacher! What is the matter?

He said: One of your brethren in faith, out of indigence, has only been able to provide his family dates, and that too on credit; seven days have passed without them having eaten anything except dates. Today he approached a grocer to procure something, but the grocer flatly refused causing him immense embarrassment. At the present moment he (Muhammad Najm A'amoli) and his family have gone to sleep without dinner. You eat a full dinner while you have a neighbor, who is needy and deserving!

I pleaded: I possessed no information whatsoever of his condition! Sayyid replied: And had you been aware of his state and yet not helped him, you would have been regarded as a Jew or even, an infidel; I am distressed as to why you do not investigate the state of your brethren in faith? My servant shall now carry these utensils of food; go with him to that person's house and tell him: "I desire that

tonight we have dinner together". Then place this bag of money (١٢٠ riyals) under his carpet and do not bring back the utensils.

Sayyid Jawaad says: I proceeded to the person's house in the company of the servant and acted as per the teacher's instructions. The neighbour said to me: No Arab can prepare this kind of meal. Tell me! To whom does this food belong? Upon his insistence, I confessed: It belongs to Sayyid Bahr al-U'loom.

Hearing this, he was filled with great astonishment over this act of Sayyid; taking an oath, he confided: No one, save for God, has been aware of my state - not even my next-door neighbours, let alone those individuals who stay far from me.(١)

٥) Abandoning Poverty is also Difficult!

During the time of the King Husain Kurt (٧٧١ – ٧٣٢), there lived a person by the name of Maulana Arshadi, who was well known for his poverty and beggary; however, he possessed a beautiful voice by means of which he would move the hearts of the people. When Husain Kurt desired to send a messenger king Shujah of Shiraz, to convey his message to him, the people suggested: The speech of Maulana Arshad, the beggar, is excellent.

King Husain summoned him and said: I intend to send you upon an important mission. The only flaw that you possess is that you beg. However, I am willing to send you to Shiraz if you promise not to bring my name into disrepute by begging there.

Saying this, he gave him twenty thousand dinars; on

١- Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ١, pg. ١۴٠; Kalimah-e-Tayyibah, pg. ١١١.

.his part, Maulana Arshadi promised that he would not beg in Shiraz

Preparations were made for the journey, the money was handed over to him and he eventually set out for Shiraz. Reaching there, he was given the reply for the message that he had from King Husain; however, when he desired to return, king Shujah and the members of his administration expressed their desire to hear some sermon in his .voice

It was decided that he would preach in the mosque after the Friday prayers. People as well as the members of the king's administration had gathered in the mosque to .hear him speak

On Friday, as he began to speak, it was not long before he had captivated everyone by his voice; observing this, his trait of beggary stimulated his greed and so, unable to restrain himself, he said: I have been placed under oath not to speak of my indigence and beggary. However, from the time I have entered your city I have not witnessed any charity from your side! Is it that all of you have taken an oath not to give me any ?alms

Hearing this, the people burst out in laughter, and then proceeded to give him so much money that he was left pleased and satisfied.(١)

Adjudication .۶۹

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ اللَّهُ يَقْضِى بِالْحَق

"And Allah judges with the truth"(٢)

:Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said

مَنْ حَكَمَ فِى دِرْهَمَيْنِ بِغَيْرِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ فَهُوَ كَافِرٌ بِاللَّهِ الْعَظِيم

"One who passes a judgment with respect

.Lataaif al-Tawaaif, pg. ۳۷۱ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Mu'min (۴۰), vs. ۲۰ -۲

to (even) two dirhams in a manner other than what God has stipulated has exhibited ('kufr' with respect to God, the Great."(۱)

Short Explanation

One of the most difficult of all worldly professions is adjudication; and if a judge tends to incline towards one of the disputing parties or issues a verdict out of ignorance or on the basis of one's whims and desires – all of which result in violation of the rights of individuals, his task becomes all the more onerous.

Judgment that is based on knowledge and not on whims and personal inclinations is very productive and the abode of such a judge is paradise.

Despite the fact that every individual, as a result of friendship and attachment, is always inclined to rule in favour of his friend rather than for one who is truly deserving, yet if there happens to arise a dispute with respect to money, rights and privileges (such as the rights and privileges of a neighbour) or family members, one must not judge falsely and wrongly in the slightest.

The Imam (peace be upon him) and the Jinn Judge (۱

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) once was busy delivering a sermon from atop the pulpit in the city of Kufah when a python suddenly appeared from the side of the pulpit and slithered up the steps towards the Imam (peace be upon him).

Terrified, the people wanted to ward the reptile away from the Imam (peace be upon him) when he (peace be upon him) signaled them to stay away. As the python reached the last step of the pulpit,

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۱- Safinah al-Bihaar, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۳۶.

the people, in a state of silence and bewilderment, observed that Imam Ali (peace be upon him) had lowered himself a little while the python had raised its head and brought its mouth close to his (peace be upon him) ears. At that moment the python issued a loud sound, which was heard by most of those present; the Imam's (peace be upon him) lips then moved as if in conversation while the python listened to his .words

After a short time had passed, the python glided down the pulpit and suddenly disappeared from sight. The Imam (peace be upon him) continued his sermon and .upon completing it, descended from the pulpit

As he (peace be upon him) did so, the people crowded around him and began questioning him about the python. The Imam (peace be upon him) explained: The issue is not what you had thought it to be. He was one of the judges from amongst the Jinn and he had found himself confused in connection with a judgment; so he approached me and sought to know the verdict. I explained the judgment to him, (whereupon he prayed for me and departed.(١

The Inclination of the Judge and his Punishment (٢

:Imam Baqir (peace be upon him) has been reported to have related

In the tribe of Bani Israel there lived a scholar, who used to adjudicate amongst the people. When he was about to die he instructed his wife: When I have died, perform the ablutions, wrap me with the shroud, place me within the coffin and cover my

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.Al-Irshaad, pg. ١٨٣ -١

.face

When he died, his wife did as she had been instructed. However, after a short while, desiring to see her husband's face one last time, she moved aside the covering from over his face when she was shaken by the sight of a worm biting her husband's nose .and eating it

That night she witnessed her husband in her dreams and sought to know the reason .for the presence of the worm

The judge said: Once, your brother, in the company of another person, had approached me for the purpose of adjudicating a dispute that had developed between them. In my heart I felt inclined to pass the judgment in his favour. The trial nevertheless, proved that the truth was with him. However, it was that inclination to pass the judgment in his favour (before the trial) that brought upon me the punishment by means of the worm that you witnessed on my face.(١)

The 'Hereafterly' Judgment (٣

Prophet Dawood (peace be upon him) once prayed to God to make manifest for him .one of His judgments that He would issue on the Day of Judgment

God revealed to him: You have sought from Me a thing which I have not manifested .before anyone; it does not befit anyone to judge in that manner except Me

However, when Prophet Dawood (peace be upon him) once again repeated his request, Jibraeel descended and said: You have requested God for something which none of the Prophets before you has ever requested; nonetheless God has answered your prayer. In the first case

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.Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ١, pg. ٥٥, Anwaar-e-Nu'maaniyah, pg. ١٥ -١

that shall come up before you for judgment, the ruling of the hereafter shall become manifest before you.

The next morning as Prophet Dawood sat in his court, an old man entered bringing along with him a youth, who held a bunch of grapes in his hand.

The old man said: O' Prophet of God! This youth entered my garden, spoilt my trees and ate my grapes without my permission.

Turning to the youth, Dawood (peace be upon him) questioned: What do you have to say? The youth confessed to having done so without the old man's permission.

At that moment God revealed to Dawood (peace be upon him): If you were to pass judgment according to the ruling of the hereafter, the Bani Israel would never accept it; (for) O' Dawood! This garden belongs to the father of this youth. This old man had entered the garden, killed the youth's father and stole forty thousand dirhams that belonged to them, which he has buried in the corner of the garden. So hand a sword to the youth and ask him to behead the old man as retaliation for the murder of his father, then hand over the garden to him and ask him to dig the garden at such and such location and extract the property which belongs to him.

Prophet Dawood (peace be upon him) proceeded to execute the judgment as commanded to him by God, the Exalted.(1)

4) The Jew and the Imam in the Presence of the Judge

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) had been sitting in the mosque of Kufah when Abdullah

1- Hayaat al-Quloob, vol. 1, pg. 333.

Ibn Qufl, a Jew belonging to the tribe of Tameem, passed by him (peace be upon him) .carrying a coat of mail

As soon as the Imam's (peace be upon him) eyes fell upon the coat of mail, he exclaimed: This belonged to Talhah Ibn Abdullah and had come into my possession as my share of the booty in the battle of Basrah. This is treachery (on the part of the .(Jew

The Jew agreed to accompany the Imam (peace be upon him) before the judge, who in reality had been appointed by the Imam (peace be upon him) himself. Both of them approached the judge whose name was Shuraih.(۱) When the Imam (peace be upon him) put forth his claim, Shuraih said: Present witnesses to testify and corroborate your claim. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) brought his son Hasan (peace be upon him) as his witness, but Shuraih said: The testimony of one person is not sufficient (according to one narration, he refused to accept the testimony of a son in favour of (his father).(۲

The Imam (peace be upon him) then presented his slave Qanbar as his witness but .Shuraih said: I shall not issue a verdict based upon the testimony of a slave

Hearing these words, the Imam (peace be upon him) was disturbed and turning to the Jew he (peace be upon him) said: Take the coat of mail and go your way for this judge .has ruled falsely and incorrectly three times

Shuraih asked: What are

۱- In the year ۱۸ A.H. or ۲۲ A.H., at the age of forty, he was appointed judge of Kufah by the second Caliph and continued to adjudicate for ۶۰ years. He lived for ۱۲۰ years.

۲- But accepted the testimony of Qanbar.

?the three rulings that have been false and incorrect

The Imam (peace be upon him) replied: Woe unto you! There is no need for witness in issues pertaining to treachery and disloyalty (it is the responsibility of the owner to present witnesses to prove how he has come to become the owner of the (.possession

Secondly, I presented Hasan (peace be upon him) as my witness but you refused to accept him, whereas the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) used to pass judgments on the basis of one witness if the claimant would take an oath (testifying to his own truthfulness). Thirdly, Qanbar had testified but you said that you would not pass a ruling on the basis of a slave's testimony; however, the truth is that .if a slave is just (and upright) his testimony needs to be accepted

Woe unto you! The Imam of the Muslims, in important affairs, is trustworthy so how ?can his claim not be acceptable

The Jew who had been a witness to the entire conversation, exclaimed: Subhanallah! The Caliph of the Muslims accompanies me before a judge; the judgment is passed against him and he complies with the verdict! O' Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) you have spoken the truth. This coat of mail belongs to you; it had fallen down .from your saddlebag and I had picked it up

He then testified to the Unity of God and the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and

his holy progeny) and became a Muslim. Imam (peace be upon him) gifted him the coat of mail and also rewarded him with nine hundred dirhams.(۱)

۵) The Eyes Turned Blind

During the Caliphate of U'thman, his servant happened to slap a Bedouin as a result of which, he became blind in one eye. The Bedouin complained to U'thman, who said: I shall pay you the compensation. The Bedouin did not agree and said: I seek retaliation. U'thman doubled the compensation but the Bedouin refused and insisted on blinding him in one eye in retaliation.

U'thman sent the case to Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) so that he could pass a judgment in the case.

The Imam (peace be upon him) asked the Bedouin to take the compensation (for the injury) but he refused. The Imam (peace be upon him) doubled the compensation but again the Bedouin refused. When he (peace be upon him) saw that the Bedouin was unrelenting, he summoned the Caliph's slave and then ordered a mirror and some cotton-wool to be brought before him. Moistening the cotton, he (peace be upon him) placed them over and around the slave's eye-lids in order to keep them open.

Then, positioning the mirror under the sun such that the sunlight was reflected into the slave's open eyes, he (peace be upon him) instructed the slave: Look into the mirror. The slave was held for such time that his eye lost its vision, and in this manner the Imam (peace be upon him) extracted the retaliation

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۱- Paighambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. ۳, pg. ۲۸۶; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۴, pg. ۳۰۲.

(for the eye.(١

Loans .٧٠

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِى يُقْرِضُ اللّهَ قَرْضاً حَسَناً

(Who is it that will lend unto Allah a goodly loan..."(٢"

:Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) has said

مَكْتُوبٌ عَلَى بَابِ الْجَنَّهِ الصَّدَقَهُ بِعَشَرَهٍ وَ الْقَرْضُ بِثَمَانِيَهَ عَشَرَ

It is written upon the door of Paradise: The reward for (giving) charity is ten times" (and that of (extending) loans is eighteen times"(٣

Short Explanation

Providing loans to those in need is a sign of generosity. Since the problems of the underprivileged are numerous, it is essential to be regardful of and considerate .towards them

The importance of giving loans can be comprehended by the fact that lending money to a Muslim brother is regarded as more virtuous than giving him charity; thus .ensuring that the society does not get entangled in interest and usury

God increases the livelihood and enhances the moral excellences of one, who lends money to others; whereas he, who despite possessing the means to lend money to .other, refrains from doing so, shall find himself afflicted with poverty and indigence

Abu Dahdaah (١

,When the verse

مَّن ذَا الَّذِى يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَه

Who is it that will lend unto Allah a goodly loan, so that He may give it increase“ ,(manifold?”(۴

was revealed, Abu Dahdaah(۵) said: O’ Prophet of God! May I be made your ransom! ?How is it that while God is Independent and Needless, He seeks from us a loan

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) replied: It is because He desires to

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۱- Qadhawatha-e-Amirul Mu’mineen (peace be upon him), pg. ۱۰۳; Wafi, vol. ۲.

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Baqarah (۲), vs. ۲۴۵.

۳- Jaame' Al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۵۹.

۴- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Baqarah (۲), vs. ۲۴۵.

۵- His name was Thaabit and possessed a strong faith. In the battle of Uhud, when the rumour spread that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) had been martyred subsequent to which the Muslims began to flee, he shouted out: If Muhammad (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has been killed, the God of Muhammad is still alive. Fight the enemies of Islam for God is your Helper. Safinah al-Bihaar, under ‘دحدح’.

.make you enter Paradise by means of this

?Abu Dahdaah asked: If I give my God a loan, do you guarantee Paradise for me

Yes. Whoever gives God a loan, God shall recompense him in Paradise, the Holy .Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) replied

?Abu Dahdaah continued: Would my wife, Umme Dahdaah be with me in Paradise

.The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: Yes

Abu Dahdaah persisted: Would it be that my daughter too shall be with me in ?Paradise

This time, as the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) replied in the affirmative, Abu Dahdaah said to him (peace be upon him and his holy progeny): Place !your hand upon my hand to confirm what you have just stated

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) gave him his hand, .whereupon he said: I have nothing but two gardens and I lend both of them to God

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) however advised: Keep .one for yourself and lend the other

When he heard this, Abu Dahdaah said: I take you, the Prophet of God, to be my .witness that I have given the best of the two gardens as loan to God

!That garden contained six hundred date palms

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said to him: God has .granted you Paradise in exchange for it

When Abu Dahdaah informed his wife of the incident, she said to

(him: May God make blessed that which you have purchased for yourself.(۱

He Repaid the Loan of the One in Debt (۲

One day, Imam Zainul A'abideen (peace be upon him) visited Muhammad Ibn Usaamah, who was sick. The Imam (peace be upon him) observed that he was ?weeping and so asked: How do you feel

.(Ibn Usaamah replied: I am in debt (and I am worried about its repayment

?The Imam (peace be upon him) enquired: How much is your debt

Fifteen thousand dinars, he replied, upon which the Imam (peace be upon him) (declared: I shall pay off your debt (and he paid it off).(۲

The Fruits of Granting Respite to the Debtor (۳

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) has stated: One who desires that God shelters him on the Day when there shall be no shelter save His, should either grant respite to one, .who owes money to him or relinquish the money that is owed to him

Once on an extremely hot day, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), while sheltering himself from the sun by means of his hands said: Who is it that desires to be sheltered from the intense heat of Hell? He repeated this sentence !three times and on all the three occasions the people said: We, O' Prophet of God

He (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) then said: One, who grants respite (in the repayment of debt) to his debtor or relinquishes the money that is owned to him (by an indigent person (shall be sheltered from the severe heat of Hell).(۳

The Ignorant Debtor (۴

On the

.U'nwaan al-Kalaam, pg. ۱۷۵ -۱

.Shanidanihaa-e-Taareekh, pg. ۱۴۶; Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۴, pg. ۲۳۴ -۲

.I'lm-e-Akhlaaq-e-Islami, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۱۴ -۳

night of his ascension, one of the scenes that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) witnessed was of a person, who was attempting to pick up a bundle of firewood. Despite trying, when he would be unable to do so, more firewood would be added to the bundle!

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) asked Jibraeel: Who is this person? Jibraeel replied: This person was in debt and desired to repay it but could not do so, and so he took another loan, making further additions to burden of his debts.(١)

۵) The Debtor and the Prayer for the Deceased

Mua'wiyah Ibn Wahab narrates:

I said to Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him): We have heard that once, a person from amongst the Ansaar died while in a state of debt; the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) refused to offer the prayers over him saying: "First clear off his debts and then offer prayers over him"

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said: What you have heard is true and correct. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) acted in this manner in order so that the people do not take their debts lightly.

The Imam (peace be upon him) then continued: The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), Amirul Mu'mineen, Imam Hasan and Imam Husain (peace be upon them) – all of them died while in a state of debt and all their debts were then

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١- L'aali al-Akhbaar; Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۵, pg. ۲۵۳.

paid off. Imam Sajjad (peace be upon him) sold the garden of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) for three hundred thousand dirhams and paid off his debts; Imam Hasan (peace be upon him) sold Amirul Mu'mineen's (peace be upon him) property for five hundred thousand dirhams and cleared the debts of his father; for three years, during the season of Hajj, Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) would call out: "Whoever has lent money to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) should (come to me so that I can clear the loan.(١

Quran .٧١

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

إِنَّ هذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِى لِلَّتِى هِىَ أَقْوَمُ

(Surely this Qur'an guides to that which is most upright"(٢"

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has said

مَا آمَنَ بِالْقُرْآنِ مَنِ اسْتَحَلَّ مَحَارِمَهُ

One who regards as lawful that which the Qur'an considers to be unlawful, has not" (brought faith upon it"(٣

Short Explanation

A reciter of the holy Qur'an is in need of three things: A heart that is humble and submissive, a body that is free from entanglement of work and a place that is free .from presence of others

As such, whenever a reciter's heart becomes submissive to God, the accursed Satan distances himself from him; whenever he isolates himself from worldly preoccupations, his heart becomes more receptive to reciting the Qur'an; and when he selects an isolated place for reciting the Qur'an, his soul develops an intimacy with God, he begins to experience the sweetness of conversing

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.Safinah al-Bihaar, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۷۷ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Israa (۱۷), vs. ۹ -۲

.Safinah al-Bihaar, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۱۵ -۳

with God and subsequently various miracles of the Qur'an shall become manifest for him.[1]

1) Attention towards the Creation or the Creator?

There was a person who would persistently visit the house of U'mar Ibn Khattaab in order that he might perhaps be given some material assistance. Exasperated by his constant visits, U'mar said to him: Have you emigrated to the house of God or to the house of U'mar? Go and recite the Qur'an and learn its teachings for then you shall not possess the need to come to my house.

The person went away; months passed and he never returned again. Upon making enquiries about him, U'mar was informed that he had distanced himself from the people and had now begun to devote all his time in an isolated place, in the worship of God.

U'mar began to search for him, and upon finding him, said: I longed to see you (and have come to inquire after your health). Tell me, what caused you to distance yourself for us?

The man replied: I read the Qur'an and it made me independent of U'mar and the People of U'mar.

Hearing this, U'mar asked: What was the verse that you recited that made you take this decision?

He replied: I was reading the Qur'an when I came across this verse:

وَ فِی السَّماءِ رِزْقُکُمْ وَ ما تُوعَدُونَ

"And in the heaven is your sustenance and what you are threatened with."[2]

Reading it, I chided myself: "My sustenance is in the heavens, whereas I search for it on the earth; I am indeed an awful person."

U'mar, greatly affected

.Tadhkerah al-Haqaaiq, pg. ۱۶ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Dhaariyaat (۵۱), vs. ۲۲ -۲

(by these words, acknowledged: You speak the truth!(۱)

The Holy Prophet and the Quran (۲

One of the spiritual qualities of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was his deep intimacy with the Qur'an.

Sa’d Ibn Hishaam relates:

I approached A’aishah, the wife of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and inquired about his ethics and conduct. In reply she asked: Do you recite the Qur'an?

I answered: Yes, I do, whereupon she remarked: The conduct of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was in complete accordance with the Qur'an.

His (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) voice was such that his recitation of the Qur’an was more beautiful and captivating than anyone else.

Anas Ibn Maalik, his (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) servant, says: While reciting the Qur'an, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) would stretch the tone of his voice.

Ibn Masu’d, who was one of the scribes, who would write down the verses when they were revealed, says: “One day the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said to me: “Recite the Qur'an so that I may listen to it.” I recited the chapter al-Nisaa till I reached the verse ۴۱:

فَكَيْفَ إِذا جِئْنا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ وَ جِئْنا بِكَ عَلى هؤُلاءِ شَهِيداً

“How will it be then, when We bring from every people a witness and bring you as a witness against these?”

As soon as I recited this verse,

1 - Hikayaat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۲, pg. ۶۵; Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, Ibn Abil Hadeed, vol. ۱۹, pg. ۳۲۰.

I observed that his eyes were filled with tears. He then said to me: This much is (sufficient."(١)

Ahmad Ibn Tuloon (٣

Ahmad Ibn Tuloon was one of the kings of Egypt. When he died, the ruling administration hired the services of a Qur'an-reciter for a large sum so that he should .recite the Qur'an over the grave of the king

One day it was found that the reciter had vanished and no one was aware where he had gone! After an intensive search, when he was eventually found, he was asked: .Why did you run away? All that he said was: I shall not recite the Qur'an any more

.He was told: If you feel that your salary is less, it can be doubled

.But he insisted: Even if you multiply it several times over, I shall not recite the Qur'an

When he was told: We shall not leave you till you reveal to us the reason for this behavior of yours, he revealed: Some days back, Ahmad Ibn Tuloon objected to my ?recitation and said: "Why do you recite the Qur'an over my grave

I said to him: I have been asked to recite the Qur'an for you so that you get its .rewards

He said: Not only do I not get any reward of your recitation on the contrary, with every verse that you recite, the fire, which engulfs me, is increased. I am told: "Do you hear the verses of the Quran? Why, while in the world, did

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Daastaan-hai-Az-Zindagi-e-Payambar, pg. ٦٣ as quoted from Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, -١ .vol. ٤, pg ١٢٠ and Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ٩٢, ٣٢٦ and the book 'Kuhl al-Basar, pg. ٧٩

?you not act in accordance with the Qur'an

The reciter then pleaded: Relieve me of the responsibility of reciting the Qur'an for (that impious king.(۱

Five Hundred Copies of the Quran atop the Spears (۴

In the battle of Siffeen, when the situation turned for the worse for the forces of Shaam, Mua'wiyah sat in consultation with A'mr A'as to find a way to evade the imminent defeat that faced him. A'mr A'as suggested: Whoever has a Qur'an should raise it on a spear and invite the people of Iraq towards an arbitration based on the .Qur'an

:Abu Tufail, one of the companions of the Imam Ali (peace be upon him) says

The dawn after the Night of Clamour (lailatul Hareer), we observed that in front of the soldiers of Shaam there appeared things that were similar to flags. When daylight increased, we realized that they had tied Qur'ans to their spears. The great Qur'an of the mosque of Shaam was tied atop three spears with ten people holding it aloft. In each of the five sections of their army there were one hundred copies of the Qur'an - for a total of five hundred copies, held atop the spears, before the army of Iraq. In addition, all the while they were heard shouting the following slogan: By God! By God! !For your religion, this book of God shall arbitrate between you and us

When Imam Ali (peace be upon him) observed this, he sighed: O' Lord! You are aware that their aim and objective is not the Qur'an. You rule between them and

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.Riwaayat-ha Wa Hikaayat-ha, pg. ۱۳۱; Daastaan-ha-e-Paraakandeh, vol. ۲, pg. ۵۵ -۱

.us for You are the True Ruler

This act on the part of the people of Shaam caused a split in the ranks of Imam's companions and there arose a disagreement amongst them. One group of simpleminded individuals said: It is not permissible for us to battle them anymore for they have invited us to the book of God. Another group said: This act of Mua'wiyah is .deception and we should not allow ourselves to be deceived

The consequence of this disagreement was that Mua'wiyah was able to extricate (himself from the battle and thus achieve what he had sought to achieve.(١

Napoleon (۵

Once Napoleon, while reflecting upon the Muslims, asked: Where is their main center? .He was informed that it was Egypt

When he traveled to Egypt together with a translator and entered its library; when :the translator opened the Qur'an, the following verse appeared before him

Surely this Quran guides to that which is most upright and gives good news to the (believers(٢

When the translator translated this verse for him, Napoleon stepped out of the library and passed the entire night in reflection and meditation. The next morning he visited .the library again and the translator translated other verses of the Quran for him

On the third day, when the translator had translated a portion of the Qur'an for him, Napoleon sought to know more about this book. The translator explained: They (the Muslims) believe that God has revealed the Qur'an upon the final Prophet Muhammad ;((peace be upon him and his holy progeny

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١- Shaagirdaan-e-Maktab-e-Aimmah, pg. ٣٧٢.

٢- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Israa (١٧), vs. ٩. إِنَّ هذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِى لِلَّتِى هِىَ أَقْوَمُ وَ يُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

.this is their book of guidance till the Day of Judgment

When he heard this, Napoleon remarked: What I have concluded from this book is that firstly, if the Muslims act upon the comprehensive and extensive teachings of this book, they shall never face humiliation and ignominy; secondly, till the time the Qur'an continues to play a role in their lives, the Muslims shall never submit before us, Westerners, except if we were to bring about a separation between them and the (Qur'an.(١

Destiny and Decree .٧٢

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ خَلَقَ كُلَّ شَیْ ءٍ فَقَدَّرَهُ تَقْدِیراً

(Who created everything, then ordained for it a measure”(٢“

:Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said

فِی قَضَاءِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ كُلُّ خَیْرٍ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ

(In every decree of God, there is goodness and benefit for the Mu'min”(٣“

Short Explanation

Destiny and decree’ is an issue that is related to dogmatic theology; one which is so‘ .extremely intricate, that comprehending it fully is not everybody’s piece of cake

A Mu'min ought to realize that whatever God decrees for him, irrespective of poverty .and affluence, life and death, sickness and soundness of health, are for his good

Since God is Wise and Aware of the wellbeing of His servants, whatever He decrees is .in their best interests

If one comes to acquire a firm conviction in the divine Wisdom and Prudence, sorrow would dissipate from the hearts, happiness would enter into the lives and none would

.have any anxiety with respect to one’s livelihood

Fetters upon the Feet (۱

:Muhammad Mahlabi, a minister relates

Once before I became a minister, I had embarked on a

p: ۷۲

۱- Raahnamaa-e-Sa’adat, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۷۸; Humaa-e-Sa’adat, pg. ۹۶.

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Furqaan (۲۵), vs. ۲.

۳- Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۷۱, pg. ۱۵۲.

journey by ship from Basrah to Baghdad. Amongst the others in the ship was person who was very frivolous and jocose. In jest, his friends bound his feet by means of chains. However, a little later when they wanted to remove the chains, to their horror .they realized they were unable to do so

When we reached Baghdad, we called for a blacksmith in order to cut the chains, but .he refused saying: I cannot do this without the order of the judge

The inmates of the ship proceeded to approach the judge and narrating the entire episode, requested him to instruct the blacksmith to cut the chains. At that juncture a youth happened to enter the gathering; looking angrily at the person in chains, he said: Are you not such and such person, who, in Basrah had killed my brother and .escaped? It has been some time now that I have been in search of you

He then brought some people of Basrah, who testified before the judge. The judge, on the basis of the testimony of the witnesses, put the person to death as a retaliation punishment for the murder committed by him. All were filled with amazement as to (how, in fun, they had managed to chain a killer and hand him over to the authorities.(١

Fish from the Sky (٢

Men are governed by destiny and decree; God grants to His servants what He knows :is good and beneficial for them. The late Sheikh Muhammad Husain Moulavi narrates

In the midst of World War II, I

.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ٣, pg. ١۴۶ -١

was compelled to enter Bahrain. On a wide scale, the people of Bahrain stated: Due to the war and non-provision of supplies, for a whole week we had to remain hungry; our grains and crops had all become exhausted. All of us thronged into the mosque and Husainiyyah and began to pray. Later we observed that, by the order of God, a vapour ascended from the sea. This vapour soon transformed itself into a cloud and a strange rain, which was accompanied by fish, poured down upon us. The fish was of excellent quality, and managed to sustain us for a week till food supplies eventually (reached us!(۱

I’zraaeel, the Companion of Prophet Sulaiman (۳

One day I'zraaeel entered the assembly of Prophet Sulaiman (peace be upon him). In that gathering, he persistently stared at one of the associates of Sulaiman (peace be .upon him) and after a short while, departed from the gathering

After he had left, the person asked Prophet Sulaiman (peace be upon him): Who was ?that person

.I'zraaeel, he (peace be upon him) replied

.The man remarked: He kept looking at me as if he intended to seize my soul

?Prophet Sulaiman (peace be upon him) inquired: What do you desire now

.The man said: Order the wind to take me to India so that I may be far away from him

Prophet Sulaiman (be upon him) commanded the wind, which took the person to .India

The next time Prophet Sulaiman (peace be upon him) met I'zraaeel, he asked: Why ?were you staring at one of my associates

He

.Daastaan-ha-e-Shigift, pg. ۳۱۳ -۱

replied: I had been ordered by God to seize the soul of that person, in a short while from that time, in India! But seeing him there left me greatly astonished. However, when I went to India at the appointed(۱) hour, I found him there and seized his soul (there.(۲

The Hoopoe (۴

One day, the army of Prophet Sulaiman (peace be upon him) which also included the .(birds, convened a regal gathering in front of him (peace be upon him

All of them, exhibiting utmost decorum and civility, stood before him (peace be upon him); each of the birds informed him (peace be upon him) of the skill and knowledge .that it possessed till it was the turn of the hoopoe

The hoopeo said: The skill that I possess is that when I am flying at great heights I am able to perceive, by my sharp and penetrative eyes, whether the water which lies in the depths of the ground gushes out of mud or from stone. It would be appropriate to grant me a rank in your army so that I can provide you information about the .presence of water when you embark upon your journeys

Prophet Sulaiman (peace be upon him) agreed and granted him the task of pointing out the water. When the crow came to know of this, he approached Prophet Sulaiman (peace be upon him) and said: The hoopoe has not spoken the truth; if he is truly able to perceive the water within the earth, then how is it

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۱- چون به امر حق به هندوسنان شدم دیدمش آنجا و جانش بستدم تو همه کار جهان را همچنین کن قیاس و چشم بگشا و ببین

۲- A'alam-e-Barzakh, pg. ۲۹; Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۸, pg. ۲۶۸.

that he is not able to perceive the snare, which is only covered by a handful of earth, ?which traps him and lands him in a cage

The hoopoe answered: O' Prophet Sulaiman! Do not pay heed to the words of my enemy! If I speak lies, you can sever my head from my body. While I am in flight I am able to perceive the snare; however, when the (divine) destiny and decree comes into (play, a curtain clouds my intellect and ration. (۱)

Faghfoor, the Chinese Emperor (۵

Having commenced his military expeditions and having brought numerous countries under his sway, Alexander then focused his sights upon China. Marching there, he laid .siege to it

The Emperor of China, in the guise of a doorkeeper, arrived in the presence of Alexander and said to him: Faghfoor, the Chinese Emperor, has sent a message that I .must convey to you in privacy

Alexander ordered everyone to leave; the gathering dispersed, leaving the two of .them in solitude

The Chinese Emperor, revealing his identity, said: I am Faghfoor, the Emperor of China. Intensely astonished, Alexander said: What gave you the confidence to dare to ?undertake such a step

Faghfoor said: I consider you to be a virtuous and rational Sultan. There never has been any enmity between us, and never have I harboured any evil thoughts about you. If you were to kill me, not a single person shall die from my army. But I have come to you personally so that I can give you whatever you desire from

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.Daastaan-ha-e-Mathnawi, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۱ -۱

.me

.Alexander said: I want you to give me the taxes of three years of China

When Faghfoor agreed, Alexander inquired: How would your state be after you have .given me the taxes

Faghfoor confessed: I shall be so weak that I would succumb to any enemy that .happens to attack me

Alexander said: If I were to be contented with the taxes of two years, how then would ?your position be

.Faghfoor replied: My condition would be slightly better than before

.What if I were to take the taxes of only one year? Alexander queried

Faghfoor said: In that case, my empire shall suffer no difficulty and I shall not be .distressed in the least

!Hearing this, Alexander said: I shall be contented with only six months of taxes

Faghfoor invited him to a banquet the following day so that he could hand over to him .the six months of taxes

The following day, entering China, Alexander was left speechless when he observed a huge army that was armed to the teeth. The entire army of Alexander found itself .ensconced within the Chinese army

;Alexander felt a little apprehensive and rued the fact that he did not come armed

Addressing Faghfoor, he said: Did you intend to play a trick on me by readying such a ?large army

Faghfoor replied: I knew that by you have been granted a great empire by means of divine decree, and that you are backed by divine succour; whoever opposes the prosperous ones is bound to taste defeat. This army is only for the

.purpose of exhibition obedience and reverence to you

Hearing this, Alexander said: Due to this understanding and reverence on your part, I gift to you the taxes of the six months that I had sought from you.(١)

Contentment (٧٣

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ أَطْعِمُوا الْقانِعَ وَ الْمُعْتَرَّ

"And feed the poor man who is contented, and the beggar"(٢)

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

كن قانعا تكن اءشكر الناس

"Be contented so that you may be the most thankful of all people"(٣)

Short Explanation

It must be realized with conviction that whatever man has been given, has been according to the will and ordainment of God.

A person having faith and conviction in the distribution of God, would never turn towards other means and as a consequence, be free of numerous inconveniences and worries.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has said: Contentment is an empire that never collapses.

This attribute elevates man to his real abode and thus, one should always be contented and pleased with what has been bestowed upon him by God and be patient with respect to that, which has not reached him.(۴)

The Conduct of Imam Sadiq (١

Contentment is a trait, admired and praised at all times, and God loves a person who is contented. This attribute becomes more noteworthy at a time when a society suffers from a shortage of food supplies.

Mu’tab, who was responsible for caretaking of the house of Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) relates:

Due to shortage in the market of Madinah, the prices of commodities had

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۱- Khazinah al-Jawaahir, pg. ۶۷۶; Zeenah al-Majaalis.
۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hajj (۲۲), vs. ۳۶.
۳- Jaame' Al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۰۲.
۴- Tadhkerah al-Haqaaiq, pg. ۳۲.

shot up. The Imam (peace be upon him) asked me: How much of food supplies do we ?have in the house

:Enough to last us for several months! I replied

.Hearing this, he said: Place all of the supplies for sale in the market

?Astonished, Mu'tab said: What kind of directive is this that you give

The Imam (peace be upon him) once again repeated his words, but this time with .greater emphasis: Take all the provisions of the house and sell them in the market

Mu'tab said: When I had acted as per the Imam's (peace be upon him) instructions and sold everything in the market, he (peace be upon him) said to me: "Your duty is to procure food supplies for my house on a day to day basis just as most of the average-".class people do

The Imam (peace be upon him) added: "The food for my family should be prepared by (mixing fifty percent of barley and fifty percent of wheat"!(١

Salman (٢

:Abu Waail narrates

I, in the company of a friend, visited Salman's house. He said to us: Had the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) not prohibited exhibiting formalities for the guests, I would have taken the trouble of preparing some delicious .food for you

He then proceeded to place some bread and salt before us. Seeing the food, my friend commented: In addition to this salt, had there been some vegetable too, it would have !made a great meal

Salman pawned his pitcher and with

.Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ١, pg. ٣١ -١

.the money, managed to purchase some vegetables

After the meals my friend, praising God, said: All praise be to God that He made us (contented with respect to what He has given us.(١

Hearing this, Salman remarked: Had you really been contented, my pitcher would not have been pawned.(٢) (This incident has also been narrated slightly differently in that the person involved was Abu Dharr and not Salman, and the thing sought was mint, (.not vegetable

By Means of Contentment the Soul Becomes Submissive (٣

One of the signs of a contented person is abstemiousness and satisfying himself with .that which restrains and subjugates the soul

:Aswad and A'lqamah narrate

One day when we approached Imam Ali (peace be upon him), we observed that before him lay a tray containing some date fibers and upon which lay two loaves of .barley bread, the chaff of barley flour being clearly visible upon the loaves

The Imam (peace be upon him) picked up the loaves and struck them on his knees till they broke and then proceeded to eat them with some salt. Observing this, we said to Fizza, the slave-girl: Why did you not remove the chaff from the flour for the Imam ?((peace be upon him

She replied: Had Ali (peace be upon him) eaten the delicious bread, its sin would have .fallen upon my shoulders

Hearing the conversation Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) smiled and said: I .have myself instructed her not to remove the chaff

?We said: But why so, O' Ali

,He replied: In this way my soul is subjugated better

۱- اَلحَمْدُ لِلّهِ الَّذیِ قَنَعَناَ بِماَ رَزَقَناَ

۲- Paighambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. ۳, pg. ۲۰۶.

it becomes contented, and the Mu'mins shall continue to follow me till I depart from this world. (1)

4) Your Food or Your Ruler

Sa'di, in his book Gulistaan, has recorded twenty four narratives in connection with the virtues of contentment, the last of them being the story of a devout worshipper, who after eating the food of the king, abandons his piety and contentment, and turns to greed and avarice.

Sa'di relates:

Once a pious worshipper took up dwelling in a cave where, away from the people, he engrossed himself in worship; he looked upon the kings and affluent ones in contempt, and was uninterested in and indifferent to the glitter and dazzle of the world.

One of the prosperous kings of the region sent the following message to the worshipper: I hope that your esteemed and noble self would agree to be my guest and grace us by joining us in our meals.

The worshipper was beguiled; accepting the invitation, he arrived for dinner and ate the food so as to act in accordance with the customary practice.

The following day the king, in order to thank the worshipper, set out for his cave. As soon as the worshipper's eyes fell upon the king, he stood up in respect, seated him beside him and began praising him. After a while, the king bid him goodbye and left.

Some of the worshipper's friends objected to his behaviour saying: Why did you lower yourself so much before him and, contrary to the conduct of distinguished and eminent worshippers displayed such affection for

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1- Daastaanhaai Az Zindagi-e-A'li, pg. 119; Anwaar al-Nu'maaniyyah, pg. 18.

?him

The worshipper replied: Have you not heard: “If you consume someone’s food, it becomes incumbent upon you that you become servile towards him and repay his (right!(١)

The Conduct of the Contented Ones (۵

Some people, as soon as they come across an opportunity, lose track of their own selves and endeavour to utilize it to the maximum possible manner for themselves .and their children

However the condition of Sheikh Ansaari, who became the absolute marja’ after the death of the author of the book Jawaahir, when he died was not different from the .time when he entered Najaf as a poor student from Dizfool

His house bore resemblance to those of the most indigent of people. Despite the fact that every year, more than a hundred thousand tumans (equivalent to hundreds of millions of tumans of today) of legal taxes would be handed over to him, he would content himself with the measliest of incomes such that when he died, he possessed .only ١٧ tumans

Incidentally, he was in debt by the same amount too. His survivors did not even have the means to establish mourning ceremonies for him; it was a wealthy person who established mourning ceremonies and Qur'an-reciting gatherings for ۶ days and .nights for the Sheikh

His restraint from greed and his contentment with the very least became the reason that when his representative in Baghdad came to Najaf and requested to be granted the responsibility of arranging the dowry for his (Sheikh’s) daughter, he refused, and had his daughter married to his nephew, Sheikh Muhammad Hasan

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.Hikaayat-ha-e-Gulistaan, pg. ١٨۴ -١

(Ansaari, with a very trivial and ordinary dowry.(١

The Day of Judgment .٧۴

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

إِنَّما تُوَفَّوْنَ أُجورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيامَهِ

(And you shall only be paid fully your reward on the resurrection day"(٢"

:Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said

إِنَّ الْخَلْقَ لَا مَقْصَرَ لَهُمْ عَنِ الْقِيَامَهِ

(For the people, there is no escape from Qiyaamah"(٣"

Short Explanation

After the Purgatory (Barzakh), all the people shall gather together on a Day in which they would either be rewarded or punished and it would be God, Who would be the Judge over them.

Those who had rejected and denied the truth would be led by the angels towards torture and chastisement, while those who had endured hardships in the way of religion and refrained themselves from sins would be heralded towards Paradise.

That day is the Qiyaamah in which none shall be able to object or protest; this is because in that angelic realm, all the deeds committed in the world would be found recorded in a manner such that not a single deed would be concealed or hidden for anyone to register a protest.

The Plaintiff of the Day of Judgment (١

Ja'far Tayyaar, the brother of Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him), together with eighty two other Muslims, emigrated to Ethiopia in the fifth year after the proclamation of the Prophethood by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy

progeny) so that not only would they remain safe from the persecutions of the polytheists, but they would also be able to propagate Islam there.

These emigrants stayed there for around twelve years, returning to Medinah in the

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۱- Seemaa-e-Farzaanigaan, pg. ۴۵۷.

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Aale I'mraan (۳), vs. ۱۸۵.

۳- Nahjul Balaghah (Faidh), pg. ۴۸۸.

year ۷ A.H., that is, around the time when the Muslims had emerged victorious in the battle of Khaibar.

It has been reported that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) asked Ja'far: During your stay in Ethiopia, what strange thing did you witness there?

He replied: I witnessed a black Ethiopian woman passing by, carrying a large basket on her head. An eve-teaser elbowed her causing her to fall down, as a result of which the basket on her head fell to the ground as well. The woman turned to the person and said: "Woe unto you from the Judge of the Day of Judgment, Who shall grant justice to the oppressed from the oppressor."

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) hearing this, was also overcome with great astonishment over this startling speech of the woman.(۱)

۲) The Most Wicked of the People on the Day of Judgment

Abdullah Ibn Ubayy Salool (one of the most obstinate hypocrites of early Islam and a staunch enemy of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) sought permission to arrive in his (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) presence.

When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) came to realize who had come, he expressed his displeasure at the thought of having to meet him; however, he ordered: Allow him to enter.

When he had entered, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) seated him and spoke to him in a warm and friendly

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۱- Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۲; Aa'laam al-Waraa, pg. ۲۱.

manner. When Abdullah had departed, A'aishah queried: O' Prophet of God! You had not spoken well of him before his entry, however, after he had entered, you spoke to .him in a very cordial manner

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) stated: O' A'aishah! The most iniquitous of all people on the Day of Judgment shall be one, whom the people (respect in order that they may remain safe from his evils.(١

Fear of the Day of Judgment (٣

Whenever the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) would leave for a battle, he would make it a point to establish a bond of brotherhood between two of his companions; he did so between Sa'eed Ibn A'bd al-Rahmaan and Tha'labah .Ansaari before he left for the battle of Tabuk

Sa'eed accompanied the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) for .jihad while Tha'labah stayed back and was responsible for looking after his family

One day when Tha'labah went to Sa'eed's house for arranging food provisions for his family, the Satan tempted him to look at Sa'eed's wife, and before long, he was soon overcome with lust. Approaching near, he placed his hand upon her, at which point she cried out: Is it appropriate that while your brother has gone on jihad, you intend to ?violate the chastity of his wife

These words affected him so drastically that he set out into the wilderness and upon reaching the base of a mountain, fell onto the ground and began weeping day and

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Baa Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Koneem, pg. ١٢٩; Mustadrak al-Wasaail, vol. ٢, pg. -١ .٩٢

.night – remorseful of his evil action

When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and his companions returned from battle, all the people from the city thronged to welcome their brothers, except Tha'labah. Sa'eed went to his house and questioned his wife about Tha'labah, .whereupon she informed him of what had transpired

Sa'eed came out of his house and began to search for Tha'labah till he eventually found him seated near a stone and repentantly slapping his head and wailing out .loudly: Woe from the shame and humiliation of the Day of Judgment

Sa'eed took him in his arms, consoled him and sought to take him to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) to find out a way for his forgiveness, but Tha'labah said: Tie my hands and place a rope around my neck in an appearance .similar to that of slaves who have attempted to run away

When Sa'eed brought him before the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said to him: You have indeed committed a grave offence. Go away from me, seek forgiveness from God and await .His orders

After a period of time, when the verse of Forgiveness and Repentance(۱) was revealed at the time of the A'sr prayers, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) sent Ali (peace be upon him) and Salman to bring Tha'labah.

They set out into the desert

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Aale I'mraan (۳), vs.۱۳۵ –۱

in search of him, eventually finding him conversing with his Lord and seeking His forgiveness. Witnessing his state, Amirul Mu'mineen's (peace be upon him) eyes filled up with tears and he (peace be upon him) gave him the good news that God had forgiven him!

It was night when they brought him to Medinah; the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was reciting the chapter al-Takaathur in the Maghribain prayers. No sooner did Tha'labah hear the first verse(١), he gave out a cry; hearing the second verse(٢), he shrieked loudly and when he heard the third verse(٣), he fell down unconscious; after the prayers, people found that he had died.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and the companions began to weep. He (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) instructed that Tha'labah be given the ablutions and prayers offered over him. As he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) accompanied Tha'labah's funeral procession, he was seen to be walking on the tips of his toes. When the people sought to know the reason for it, he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: The angels who had come to participate in his prayers and join his funeral procession were so great in number that I had to walk upon my toes!(۴)

۴) Imam al-Mujtaba

When Imam Hasan (peace be upon him) was about to die, those around him observed that he (peace be upon him) was weeping and

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١- أَلْهاكُمُ التَّكاثُرُ

٢- حَتَّى زُرْتُمُ الْمَقابِرَ

٣- كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ

۴- Khazinah al-Jawaahir, pg. ٣١۵; Raudhah al-Anwaar of Sabzwaari.

so they asked: O' Son of the Prophet of God! Despite your relationship with the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and the rank and status that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has mentioned about you do you still weep? Twenty times you have performed Hajj on foot; on three occasions you have given one half of all your wealth in the way of God, and yet you weep?

The Imam (peace be upon him) said: I weep due to fear of Qiyaamah and separation from my friends.(١)

Taubah Ibn Summah (۵

There lived a person by the name of Taubah Ibn Summah, who spent most of the time of his day and night in vigilance and self-examination of his soul.

One day he sat to count the number of days he had lived and calculated the figure to be ۲۱,۵۰۰. When the enormity of the figure struck him, he said: Woe unto me! Would I be meeting the Exalted God on the Day of Judgment with this figure? If I were to have committed even one sin per day, I would have ۲۱,۵۰۰ sins; what then would be my state? Having said this, he fell down unconscious.

When the people approached him, they found that he had died in that state of unconsciousness; it was only the thought and fear of the reckoning of the Day of Judgment that brought about his death.(٢)

Working .٧۵

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

وَ أَنْ لَيْسَ لِلْإِنْسانِ إِلاَّ ما سَعى

"And

p: ٨٨

.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۴, pg. ۲۰۸ -۱

.Sarmaayeh-e-Sa'adat, pg. ۳۹ -۲

(that man shall have nothing but what he strives for”(١)

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

الْمُؤْمِنَ إِذَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ حِرْفَةٌ يَعِيشُ بِدِينِهِ

If a Mu'min does not possess a profession, he shall endeavour to earn his livelihood“ (by using his religion (which is immensely reprehensible)”(٢)

Short Explanation

The best food for oneself and one’s family is that which has been procured by one’s .own effort, legitimately

Lawful food is a consequence of lawful work and earnings, and one who works in this manner and strives for the sake of himself and his family is akin to a soldier striving in .the way of God

Those who have habituated themselves to laziness and lethargy, face great difficulties with respect to their livelihoods such that they are unable to procure earnings sufficient to fulfill even their basic necessities. They thus, pollute themselves .by engaging in illegal and unlawful professions

One who is incapable in earning his basic needs of this world, would also be impotent .in earning for his hereafter

The Endowment Letter (١

During his caliphate Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) once said: All throughout Iraq my subjects are in ease and comfort – they drink sweet water and eat bread .made of wheat

The Imam (peace be upon him) had freed one of his slaves, by the name of Abu Naizar, upon the condition that he should work for him (peace be upon him) in his plantation for five years. Later on, the Imam (peace be upon him) granted him the task of supervising his fields

۱- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Najm (۵۳), vs. ۳۹.

۲- Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۱۰۳, pg. ۹.

.’and springs, one of which came to be popularly known as ‘river of Abu Naizar

:He relates

One day the Imam (peace be upon him) came to inspect his field and dismounting ?from his horse inquired: Do you have some food with you

I replied: Yes, although I fear it does not match up to your standards – I have gourd .with some fat oil

.The Imam (peace be upon him) said: Bring it

When I had brought the food, he washed his hands and then proceeded to eat it. After he had finished, he washed his hands again, drank some water and then said: Bring .me the pickaxe

When I brought it, he took it from me, entered into a dry well and began to dig so hard .that he was eventually overcome with exhaustion and fatigue

To do away his exhaustion he came out of the well; perspiration dripping from his holy .forehead which he would clear by means of his fingers

A little later he once again entered the well, raising a din as he worked hard in it. While he (peace be upon him) was digging, all of a sudden, a fountain of water gushed out like the neck of a camel. The Imam (peace be upon him) immediately emerged from within the well and still perspiring, kept saying: This is charity! This is charity. Bring me .some ink and paper

I hurriedly brought some ink and paper for the Imam (peace be upon him), who wrote the following bequest: This is an

endowment from the servant of God, Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) given to the needy ones of Medinah as charity – a charity that cannot be sold, gifted or transferred till for so long as God is the owner of the heavens and the earth, except if Hasan and Husain (peace be upon them) fall in need of it for then this well would (become their property.(۱)

U'mar Ibn Muslim (۲

One day Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) inquired about one of his companions by the name of U'mar Ibn Muslim, whereupon a person informed him: He has confined .himself to acts of worship and has totally abandoned his trade

Hearing this, the Imam (peace be upon him) said: Woe unto him! Does he not know ?that the prayers of one, who abandons his work and profession are not answered

:Continuing, the Imam (peace be upon him) related

When the second and third verses of the chapter al-Talaaq were revealed, stating: "And whoever is careful of (his duty to) Allah, He will make for him an outlet, And give him sustenance from whence he thinks not; and whoever trusts in Allah, He is sufficient for him"(۲), some of the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) enclosed themselves in their houses, abandoned their work and confined themselves in acts of worship, saying: God is sufficient for us to provide us .sustenance

When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was informed of this, he asked them: What

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۱- Islam Wa Kaar Wa Kushish, pg. ۲۴.

۲-. مَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجاً وَ يَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لا يَحْتَسِبُ وَ مَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ

?has caused you to adopt this attitude

They replied: According to the second and third verses of the chapter al-Talaaq, God has taken upon Himself to provide us our sustenance and hence we have restricted !our activities to acts of His worship

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) rebuked them saying: The prayers of one, who abandons his work and busies himself in worship, are not (answered. It is incumbent upon you to work and earn your sustenance.(١

To Work is Better than Consuming Charity (٣

Once the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was informed that a person from Madinah had become afflicted with abject poverty. He (peace be upon !him and his holy progeny) said: Bring him to me

When some people brought the person before him, he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said to him: Bring whatever you possess in your house; do not regard .anything as insignificant

The person went home and returned with a bowl and sackcloth. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) placed them for auction, and they were .eventually purchased by a person for two dirhams

Handing over the money to the poor Muslim, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) advised: Utilize one dirham to buy some food for your family .and use the other dirham to purchase an axe for yourself

The man did as instructed; purchasing an axe he approached the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), who then said

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.Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ٩, pg. ٧٣ -١

to him: Go into the desert and collect firewood; collect every piece of wood that you find and do not consider anything to be trivial and insignificant, and then proceed to sell them.

He went away and begun to act as per the instructions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny). Fifteen days later his financial state had improved; he came to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) who said to him: It is better for you that you work and earn your wage rather than take charity and enter the plains of Qiyaamah on the Day of Judgment with the ugly sign of charity manifesting upon your face.(۱)

۴) Putting the Soul to Labour

Fadhl Ibn Abi Qarrah relates:

Once when we approached Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him), we found him hard at work in his field. Observing this, we said to him (peace be upon him): May we be made your ransom! Either permit us to do the work or let your servants do it.

The Imam (peace be upon him) said: No. Let me work. I desire that I meet God after having exerted myself and worked by my own hands in seeking lawful sustenance.

He (peace be upon him) then added: Even Ali (peace be upon him) used to inconvenience himself for the purpose of procuring lawful income.(۲)

۵) Ya'qub Ibn Laith Saffaar

All the rulers of the Saffaar dynasty had been Shiites and their rule had extended for a period of fifty six years. They were seven in number,

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۱- Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۳, pg. ۵۷; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۱۰۳, pg. ۱۰.

۲- Shanidani-ha-e-Taareekh, pg. ۴۷; Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۳, pg. ۱۴۷.

.(.the first of them being Ya'qub Ibn Laith Saffaar (d. ۲۶۵ A.H

Ya'qub originally was a coppersmith by profession and it is for this reason that he came to be known as Saffaar. Slowly, he set about gathering an army for himself and began killing the anti-religious Khawaarij. His activities witnessed an upturn till he .eventually occupied Khorasan, Seestaan and several other cities

It has been recorded that he was an extremely gifted administrator such that few have been known to possess the management and systematization skills that he .possessed. The obedience of his soldiers to his orders was unparalled

When Ya'qub would order his army to proceed for battle, the soldiers would ready themselves in such a manner that they would collect their mounts while they were .grazing, mount them and set out towards their target

It was observed that once, a person's horse was chewing some hay; the person pulled it out of the animal's mouth in order that there be no delay, even in the measure of chewing of the grass by the animal, in obeying the orders of the Ya'qub. Addressing the horse, he said: King Ya'qub has prohibited the animals from eating !their food

Another person was observed to be naked under his battle-dress. When questioned, he replied: I was engaged in performing the ablution of janaabat when the king's announcer announced: "Get ready for battle". Not wanting to delay myself in complying with the king's order, I did not wear my clothes and satisfied myself with

(wearing only the battle-dress!(1)

Begging .76

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ أَمَّا السَّائِلَ فَلا تَنْهَرْ

(And as for him, who asks, do not chide (him)”(2“

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

لو لا ان السائل يكذب ما قدس من رده

If it were not for the telling of lies by the beggars, one who rebuffed them, would not“ (be consecrated”(3

Short Explanation

Some people have transformed themselves into beggars, adopting begging as their profession; despite possessing the means, they extend their hands before others, requesting help and assistance. These are those who, on the Day of Judgment, shall .meet God in a state that their faces shall be devoid of flesh

A Mu'min is one, who does not bark like a dog, does not possess avarice, and whose self-esteem prevents him from stretching out his hands before every Tom, Dick and Harry. How then is it possible for the face, which falls into prostration for God and the hands that rise up towards the heavens in the qunoot, to humiliate and debase ?themselves before others

Of course, the Mu'mins ought to identify those that are needy and while preserving their respect and esteem, assist them in order that they do not stretch out their hands .for begging

Imam Sadiq and the Beggar (1

:Masma’ Ibn A'bd al-Malik relates

We were in the company of Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) at Mina (where the Pilgrims halt during Hajj) and engaged in eating grapes that lay before us in a vessel when a beggar approached us and asked the Imam (peace be upon

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.Tatimmah al-Muntaha, pg. ۲۶۲ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Dhuha (۹۳), vs. ۱۰ -۲

Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۹۸ -۳

.him) for some help

The Imam (peace be upon him) ordered a bunch of grapes to be given to him. When the grapes were offered to him, the beggar refused saying: I am not in need of this. I .require dirhams

The Imam (peace be upon him) said: May God increase your sustenance. The beggar departed but returned shortly and said: Give me that bunch of grapes. The Imam (peace be upon him) said: May God increase your livelihood, but this time did not give .him any grapes

Not very long afterwards, another beggar arrived and asked him for something to be given to him. The Imam (peace be upon him) picked up three grapes with his own hands and handed them to him. The beggar took the grapes and said: Praise be to the .God of the Worlds, Who provided me these grapes

.Hearing this, the Imam (peace be upon him) said to him: Wait

Then filling his two palms with grapes, he handed them to the beggar. The beggar .took the grapes and again praised God

When the Imam (peace be upon him) heard this, he turned to his slave and inquired: How much money do you have with you? The slave replied: Twenty dirhams. The Imam (peace be upon him) handed them over to the beggar. The beggar once again praised God, saying: O' Lord! Praise is for You, this money is from You and You do not .have any partner

For the third time, the Imam (peace be upon him) asked

him to wait and this time, removing his garment, handed it to him. The beggar took the garment and, wearing it, said: Praise be to the God, who has dressed and covered me. Then, addressing the Imam (peace be upon him), he said: O' Aba A'bdillah! May !God grant you a goodly recompense

Having prayed for him (peace be upon him) the beggar began to move away; .however, this time the Imam (peace be upon him) did not stop him

We figured that had the person not prayed for the Imam (peace be upon him) and had continued to only praise God, the Imam (peace be upon him) would have continued to (bestow him with gifts.(١

Abbas Dous (٢

Once A'bbas Daus was in the public bath when a person approached him and said: I intend to start begging and hence I desire to remain with you in order to acquire its !skills from you

A'bbas said: It is not necessary for you remain with me. Just keep in mind that the art of begging has three principles and if you utilize these three principles, you would be a perfect beggar: Firstly, you must beg, irrespective of the place; secondly, you must beg, irrespective of the person; and thirdly, you must accept irrespective of whatever .is given to you. The person kissed the hand of A'bbas and left

One day coincidentally, A'bbas had gone to the public bath in order to cleanse himself and rid his body of its excess hair. There he was approached

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.Baa Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Koneem, pg. ١٢٣; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۴٧, pg. ۴٢ -١

by that person, who said to him: Give me something. A'bbas said: Are you begging in the public bath? The person said: (I beg) irrespective the place. A'bbas said: (You beg) even from A'bbas? The person said: (I beg), irrespective of the person. Finally A'bbas said: Even if it be the excess hair of the body? The person replied: (I take) irrespective of whatever is given.

Hearing this, A'bbas exclaimed: Bravo! You have learnt the principles of begging excellently.(1)

3) The Limits of the Impoverished Ones

Abu Baseer states: I informed Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him): One of your Shiites, a pious person by the name of U'mar, due to his destitution, approached Isa Ibn Aa'yan and sought some help from him. However, Isa said: 'I have some zakaat in my possession but I shall not give it to you for I have observed that you have purchased meat and dates, which indicates that you are not indigent.

U'mar said: In one business transaction my share of profit turned out to be one dirham; I spent one-third of it to purchase some meat, spent another one-third for purchasing some dates and utilized the remaining in fulfilling other requirements of the house.

The Imam (peace be upon him) was visibly disturbed upon hearing this and placing his hand upon his forehead (as a sign of distress and disconcertedness) said: God has stipulated for the impoverished, a share in the wealth of the affluent ones in a measure that would enable them to lead their lives in a good manner; had that

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1- Daus is a tribe from Yemen and this A'bbas Daus was proverbial and beguiling in the art of begging.

.measure not been sufficient, He would have stipulated an even greater share

Therefore, the poor ones ought to be given in the measure such that they are able to provide for themselves with respect to food, clothing, marriage, charity and Hajj; strictness and stringency ought not to be exhibited with respect to them, especially (for the likes of U'mar, who is of the pious ones.(١

The Respectable Destitute (۴

Once Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) sent nine hundred kilograms of dates from his own farm situated in Yanba' (in the outskirts of Medinah) for one person. This person was of those who, though in need of financial help never permitted himself to .ask for it, neither from him (peace be upon him) nor from others

A person commented to the Imam (peace be upon him): By God! That person had never sought any help from you that you gave him this gift. It would have been quite !sufficient had you given him just one kilogram

The Imam (peace be upon him) said: May God never increase the likes of you among the people! I exhibit munificence while you exhibit parsimony? If I do not give him that which he expects from me except after he has asked me for it, I would not have been doing him any favour. This is because I would then have compelled the face, which .prostrates on the ground before God and worships Him, to plead before me

And one who acts thus with his brother Muslim, despite knowing that he

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١- Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ١, pg. ١۴٢; Sharh Man Laa Yahdhuruhu al-Faqeeh, the Book .of Zakaat, pg. ٣۶

is deserving of help, has not spoken the truth to God. This is because when he prays for his brother Muslim saying:

اللهم اغفر للمؤمنين و المؤمنات

"O' Lord! Forgive the male and female believers!" he seeks forgiveness for his brother Muslim, he is effectively seeking Paradise for him. But at the same time when it comes to giving to him the temporal provisions of this world he exhibits stinginess!

Thus it is inappropriate for him to speak out something which he does not practice.(۱)

۵) The Young Beggar

Once a young man and his wife were having their meals which consisted of roasted chicken, when a beggar came up to the door and asked for some help. The young man came out and with great harshness, drove him away from his house. The needy one having faced the outburst, turned and walked away.

It so happened that after a period of time this young man lost all his wealth and became a pauper. He also divorced his wife, who subsequently got married to another person.

As fate would have it, one day this lady and her second husband were having their food – roasted chicken – when suddenly a beggar came up to the door and sought help. The man said to his wife: Arise and hand this chicken to the beggar. The lady picked up the food and approached the beggar, but when her eyes fell upon him, she recognized him to be her erstwhile husband. Handing him the chicken, she

۱- Islam Wa Mustamandaan, pg. ۲۵۱; Furu' al-Kafi, (Old Publication), pg. ۱۶۷.

.returned; her eyes swimming in tears

When the husband noticed this, he asked her the reason for her weeping. She replied: This beggar was my former husband. She then went on to narrate the entire incident of her former husband and the beggar, and how he had scolded him and driven him .away

When the lady completed her narrative, her second husband said: O' Wife! By God! I (was that beggar!(١

Helping Others .٧٧

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

فَوَجَدَا فِيهَا جِدَارًا يُرِيدُ أَن يَنقَضَّ فَأَقَامَهُ قَالَ لَوْ شِئْتَ لَتَّخَذْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا

Then they found in it a wall which was on the point of falling, so he put it into a right" (state"(٢

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

مَن قَضَى لِاَ خِيْهِ الْمُوْمِن حاَجَةً فَكَاَنَّما عَبدَ اللهَ دَهْرَهً

One who fulfils the desire of his brother Mu'min, would be as if he has worshipped" (God for his entire life"(٣

Short Explanation

God has created the people in a manner that they remain associated and connected to one another so that, by this way, they strive to fulfill each other's needs and .requirements

At times a Mu'min falls in need of money for his house rent or treatment of disease or requires a recommendation in order to attain someone's assistance but some people, despite possessing the means and the ability, due to some imaginary or apparent

benefits, hesitate to offer their help. In such cases, God gets them entangled with their enemies (in this world) while, on the Day of Judgment, they shall be

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۱- Dunyaa-e-Jawaan, pg. ۳۳۱; Aathaar al-Saadiqeen, vol. ۸, pg. ۱۳۹.

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Kahf (۱۸), vs. ۷۷.

۳- Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۳۰.

.made to suffer punishment and chastisement

The recommendations and rewards related to fulfilling the needs of the people have been emphasized in such great measure that one is left amazed that despite this great path available for procuring the success in the hereafter, how very few are .those who make the best of it

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) has stated: Fulfilling a need of a Mu'min brother is better than liberating a thousand slaves and giving a thousand horses (for jihad) in the .path of God

Despite all the emphasis, it is the whisperings (of the Shaitaan) and attachment to the world, which prevent man from helping out the others.(۱)

Nine Thousand Years (۱

:Maimoon Ibn Mahraan narrated

I was sitting beside Imam Hasan (peace be upon him) when a man came up to him and said: O' Son of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny)! I owe a person a debt but do not possess any money to repay it and so he intends to hurl me .into prison

The Imam (peace be upon him) said: Presently I do not possess any money by which I can pay off your debt. The man pleaded: Then do something so that he does not put .me into prison

The Imam (peace be upon him) had been in a state of itekaaf, but he put on his shoes and intended to move out of the mosque whereupon I said to him: O' Son of the Prophet of God! Have you forgotten that you are

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.Ihyaa al-Quloob, pg. ۱۲۱ -۱

?(in a state of itekaaf (and you must not go out of the mosque

The Imam (peace be upon him) said: No! I have not forgotten. However I have heard from my father that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) used to say: "One, who strives to fulfill a desire of his Muslim brother is like one who has spent nine thousand years, fasting during the days and worshipping during the (nights.(١

Breaking the Circumambulation (٢

:Aabaan Ibn Taghlib narrates

I was engaged in the circumambulation of the Ka'bah in the company of Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) when one of my friends asked me to move to a side and listen to his request. Not wanting to leave the company of the Imam (peace be upon him), I .ignored him and disregarded his request

In the next round around the Ka'bah that person signaled me to come towards him; this time however the Imam (peace be upon him) happened to see him and so asked me: O' Aabaan! Does he have some work with you? I replied in the affirmative, whereupon the Imam (peace be upon him) inquired: Who is he? I said: One of my friends. The Imam (peace be upon him) further inquired: Is he also a Mu'min and a Shiite? I replied: Yes. Hearing this, the Imam (peace be upon him) instructed: Go to .him and fulfill his desire

Should I discontinue my circumambulation? I queried. He (peace be upon him) replied: Yes. I asked: Is it permissible

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١- Riwaayat-ha Wa Hikaayat-ha, pg. ١٢٢; Daastaan-ha-e-Paraakandeh, vol. ٢, pg. ١٥٢.

to discontinue even the obligatory circumambulations and leave them midway if it is for the purpose of fulfilling the needs of a Mu'min? He (peace be upon him) replied: .Yes

I halted my circumambulation and proceeded towards the man. After assisting the person, I returned to the Imam (peace be upon him) and requested him to inform me (of the rights of a Mu'min upon another Mu'min...(۱)

Concern towards the Needy (۳

:Waqidi relates

It so happened that once I was faced with abject poverty and was compelled to seek a loan from an A'lawi(۲) friend of mine, especially since the month of Ramadhan was near at hand. I wrote him a letter and he reciprocated by sending me a sac containing .one thousand dirhams

Soon after, I received a letter from another friend requesting me to assist him with a loan. I sent the sac containing the thousand dirhams, which I had taken as loan, to him .so that so that he could be relieved of his problem

It was not long before both, the A'lawi friend as well as one to whom I had sent the money, arrived at my place. The A'lawi enquired: What did you do with the money that I sent to you? I said: I have utilized it in a good deed. Hearing this he laughed and, placing that sac of money before me, said: Having sent you the money,I had no more money left. With the month of Ramadhan approaching, I decided to seek some money from this friend, only to receive

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۱- Shanidani-ha-e-Taareekh, pg. ۶۹; Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۳, pg. ۳۵۶.

۲- One, who is from the descendants of Imam A'li (peace be upon him) (Translator's (comments

.the sac with my own seal upon it, which I had sent for you

As all of us are in need, we have come here so that we distribute the money amongst .ourselves till such time that God provides an opening for us

.We divided the money amongst ourselves and parted from each other

However within the first few days of the month of Ramadhan all the money was exhausted. One day Yahya Ibn Khaalid summoned me; when I presented myself .before him, he said: I have dreamt that you are faced with poverty. Tell me the truth

When I narrated to him the past incidents, he was greatly astonished, and subsequently ordered thirty thousand dirhams to be given to me and ten thousand .dirhams to be given to each of the other two friends

It was because of our concern and care towards fulfilling the needs of our brethren (that this windfall came our way.(۱

Extinguishing the Lamp (۴

:Haarith says

One night I was engaged in conversation with Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him). .As we talked, I said to him (peace be upon him): I am in need of something

The Imam (peace be upon him) said: O' Haarith! Do you regard me worthy of ?informing me of your need

Of course O' Ali: I said

When he heard this, the Imam (peace be upon him) suddenly rose from his place and extinguished the lamp; then, with great affection and compassion he sat down beside me and said: Do you know why I have extinguished the lamp? I have done this

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.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۳۸; Farajun Ba'd al-Shiddah, pg. ۱۸۶ -۱

so that you can speak out all that is there in your heart without any kind of formality, .and that I do not see the embarrassment upon your face

Now speak out all that you desire to state for I have heard the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) say: "When the needs of a person are placed in the heart of another, they becomes a divine trust, which must be concealed from others; .the one who conceals them, shall be given the rewards of worship

But if they happen to be divulged, it befits all those who become aware of them to (endeavour to fulfill them for the needy one."(١

Lettuce (۵

:One of the scholars of Najaf relates

One day, at a greengrocer's shop, I witnessed the late Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Aaqa Qaadhi(٢) (d. ١٣۶۶ A.H.) busy selecting lettuces. However, contrary to the normal practice, I observed him selecting those that had become withered and those that .possessed large and coarse leaves

He selected the lettuces and handed them to the owner of the shop, who weighed it for him after which, tucking them under his cloak, he moved out of the shop. I hastened after him and enquired: Sir, why did you select the lettuces that were ?inferior and undesirable

He replied: This greengrocer is a poor person and I occasionally help him; however, I do not wish to give him something gratuitously so that firstly, his esteem and honour ,does not erode and secondly, he does not, God forbid

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.Baa Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Koneem, pg. ٩۵; Wafi, vol. ۶, pg. ۵٩ -١

He was the teacher of irfaan (mysticism) for Allamah Tabatabai, Ayatullah Behjat, -٢ Ayatullah Sayyid A'bd al-Kareem Kashmiri and numerous others, and truly, the like of .him has rarely been seen in the past sixty years

.habituate himself to taking things free of charge and thus become lax in his work

I am aware that no one shall purchase these lettuces from him and he shall have to dump them outside when he closes his shop and so, in order to prevent him from .suffering losses, I purchased them from him

As for me, it does not make a difference if I eat lettuces that delicate and tender or (those that are large and coarse!(١

Malice .٧٨

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ نَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍ ّ

(And We will remove whatever of ill-feeling is in their breasts"(٢"

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

المومن ليس بحقود

(A Mu'min is never malicious"(٣"

Short Explanation

Malice is housed within the soul. A malicious person, because of the fact that he cannot prevail over his opponent or has been insulted, abused, suffered false allegations or has been deprived of rank or riches, continues to harbour enmity towards a person and awaits for an opportune and sensitive moment when he can .overcome and destroy him

A malicious person, upon witnessing the person whom he resents, is always disturbed; the flames of malice and acrimony, if not checked, would only intensify to an extent that when the faculty of reason and intellect gets overpowered by the faculty of anger, man, God forbid, perpetrates an act, repentance over which does

.not yield any benefit

A Mu'min is never malicious and vindictive, either entrusting the evils committed by a person to God, or pardoning and disregarding

p: ١٠٧

١- Seema-e-Farzaanegaan, pg. ٣۴٩; Mehr-e-Taabaan, pg. ٢٠.

٢- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Aa'raaf (٧), vs. ۴٣.

٣- Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ١, pg. ٣١١.

them – always seeking assistance from the faculty of reason so as to prevent himself from burning in the flames of malice and rancour.(1)

1) Maliciousness of Waleed

A'qabah, the father of Waleed (the governor of Kufah), had once spat upon the face of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) in Mecca. He had joined the ranks of the infidels in the battle of Badr. When the infidels were defeated, Aqabah was taken captive and brought before the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), who ordered Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) to put him to death.

Consequently, his son Waleed, who had been appointed the governor of Kufah during the caliphate of U'thman, always harboured malice towards Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) and continued to abuse him (peace be upon him) throughout his life.

When Waleed fell ill, Imam Hasan (peace be upon him) paid him a visit. He opened his eyes and witnessing Imam Hasan (peace be upon him) said: I am repentant of all my past deeds and seek God's forgiveness for them, except the abuses which I hurled at your father, for which I am not repentant.

The Imam (peace be upon him) said: My father had killed your father and had punished you (for consuming wine) and this is the reason of your animosity towards him (and it is this malice that has provoked you to abuse him).(2)

2) Ibn Sallaar

In the sixth century a person by the name of Ibn Sallaar, one of the officers

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1- Ihyaa al-Quloob, pg. ۶۴.
2- Kaifer-e-Kirdaar, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۰۹.

of the Egyptian army, rose to the rank of minister and ruled over the people with .comprehensive power and authority

On the one hand he was courageous, intelligent and active, while on the other hand self-centered and malicious and hence, while he was a minister, he not only served .the people but also committed great and numerous acts of oppression

During the time when he was a soldier in the army, he was sentenced to pay certain damages and compensation. He appealed to Abi al-Karam, the clerk of the treasury, for justice, but Abi al-Karam refused to consider his explanations and upheld the sentence saying: Your words do not enter into my ears. Ibn Sallaar was infuriated and continued to harbour malice towards him. When he became the minister and an opportunity presented itself for revenge, he had Abi al-Karam arrested and ordered a .long nail to be hammered into one of his ear till it emerged from the other one

While the nail was being hammered, whenever Abi al-Karam would shriek out in pain, !Ibn Sallaar would say: Now my words have entered into your ears

Later, upon Ibn Sallaar's orders, the lifeless body of Abi al-Karam with the hammered (nail was hung up on the gallows.(١

Rancour Transforms into Friendship (٣

Shaibah's father was called U'thman, who, along with the other disbelievers, was killed in the battle of Uhud. Since the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) had killed his father and eight persons from his family, Shaibah held an intense grudge against

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Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ١, pg. ١۶٣; Lughat Naameh-e-Dehkhuda, Abu Sa'd, -١ .pg. ٣٢٠

.him

He himself said: There was none towards whom I harboured more animosity than Muhammad, for he had killed eight persons from my family, all of whom possessed the competence and ability to be leaders and commanders. I had always nurtured the idea of killing him but, after the conquest of Mecca, I lost hope of achieving my goal for I used to think: How would it be possible for me to achieve my objective when all .the Arabs had flocked into his religion

However when the people of Hawaazan united in their opposition towards him (peace be upon him) and declared their intention to fight him (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), the desire of mine was to a certain extent rekindled within my heart. But the problem that lay before me was that he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) !was surrounded by ten thousand soldiers

However when the Muslim forces fled in their first encounter with the forces of Hawaazan, I said to myself: This is the opportunity to achieve my objective and take .(revenge for the killings (of the family members

I attacked the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) from the right flank but found A'bbas, his uncle, guarding him. Coming up from the left flank, I realized that Abu Sufiyaan Ibn Haarith, (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was vigilant of him and said to myself: This person guarding Muhammad is also a brave .person

I then came

up from behind up and reached so close that my sword was about to reach him when suddenly, a veil of fire appeared as a barrier between him and me leaving my eyes dazzled with its intensity. Covering my face with my hands I retreated, realizing that .he was under God's protection

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) became aware of me and said: Shaibah come near. When I had done so, he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) placed his hand upon my chest and said: O' Lord! Ward away the Shaitaan from him. Now when he looked at me, I found him to be dearer to me than my own .self and all the former rancour had been transformed into friendship and affection

I then engaged myself in fighting against the enemies and was so devoted in assisting the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) that even if my father .were to have stood up before me, I would have killed him too

After the battle had concluded, he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said to me: What God has desired for you is better than what you had desired for yourself.(۱)

The Vindictive Hypocrite (۴

Rancour and malice are of the signs of hypocritical individuals and during the time of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), they used to manifest .these in various forms

(Once the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny

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۱- Paighambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. ۳, pg. ۲۹۸; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۲۱, pg. ۱۵۶.

was seated in the mosque in the company of a group of Muhaajir (The Emigrants) and Ansaar (The Helpers), when suddenly Ali (peace be upon him) entered. Those present rose up in respect and warmly welcomed him till he (peace be upon him) sat in his .(usual place - near the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny

Meanwhile, two individuals in the gathering who were being suspected of hypocrisy, .began to whisper to each other

Observing them, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) realized why they were speaking amongst themselves. This enraged him so much that the signs of infuriation became manifest upon his face. He then said: By The One in Whose power lies my soul! None shall enter Paradise except he who loves me. And do know that one who imagines that he loves me but regards this person as an enemy .(Ali Ibn Abi Talib), is a liar

At this moment Ali's hand was in the hand of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and the following verse was revealed(۱): O you who believe! when you confer together in private, do not give to each other counsel of sin and revolt and disobedience to the Messenger, and give to each other counsel of goodness and guarding (against evil); and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, to Whom you shall be (gathered together. (۲

The Liver Eating Hind (۵

In the battle of Uhud, Hamzah, the Chief of the Martyrs and the

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۱ - Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Mujaadilah (۵۸), vs. ۹ يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ إِذَا تَنَاجَيْتُمْ فَلَا تَتَنَاجَوْاْ بِالْاثْمِ وَ الْعُدْوَانِ وَ مَعْصِيَتِ الرَّسُولِ وَ تَنَاجَوْاْ بِالْبرِّ وَ التَّقْوَى وَ اتَّقُواْ اللَّهَ الَّذِى إِلَيْهِ تحُْشَرُون

۲- Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۴, pg. ۱۵۹; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۳۹, pg. ۲۷۰.

uncle of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) killed nearly thirty people before he was eventually martyred.

Hind, the wife of Abu Sufiyaan, in maliciousness, had no parallel amongst all the ladies of her time. She promised Wahshi, the slave of Jubair Ibn Muti'm, great wealth and riches if he would kill Hamzah. Thus Wahshi lay in ambush for Hamzah, and pierced his dagger into Hamzah's body and killed him.

As per the instructions of Hind, he then split open Hamzah's stomach and removed his liver. When it was brought before Hind, she began to bite it and it is because of this that Hind came to be notoriously known as 'liver-eater'.

As per her promise, Hind gave all her ornaments to Wahshi. Then coming to the body of Hamzah, due to the malice that had existed in her heart, she cut off his ears, nose, lips and proceeded to make a crude necklace out of them so that she could take it to Mecca and display it to the ladies there. The other ladies of Mecca followed suit in mutilating the bodies of the other martyrs.

The vindictive Abu Sufiyaan too, when he stood over the body of Hamzah, pierced his spear into a corner of his mouth and said: O' disowned one! Taste this!(١)

٧٩. Weeping

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

فَلْيَضْحَكُواْ قَلِيلًا وَ لْيَبْكُواْ كَثِيرًا

"Therefore they shall laugh little and weep much"(٢)

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) had said:

بُكاءُ الْعُيُون وَ خَشْيَةُ الْقُلوبِ مِنْ رَحْمَهِ اللهِ تَعالَى

"The

.Muntahal Aa’maal, vol. ۱, pg. ۶۱ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Taubah (۹), vs. ۸۲ -۲

weeping of the eyes and the fear of the hearts are of the mercy of God, The (Exalted"(1)

Short Explanation

One of the manifestations of divine mercy is weeping. Tears flow out for a number of reasons – out of attraction for those, who are attracted; out of sorrow for those who are in misery and out of worldly losses for those who are attached to the world.

If one weeps as a result of an inner change, it is due to Divine grace but if it stems from deceit (like the brothers of Yusuf), its pretentiousness shall become apparent and its evil effects manifest.

If a person cannot weep, he should put up an appearance of weeping in order that he becomes a recipient of divine mercy, especially so with respect to Imam Husain (peace be upon him) as it has been greatly emphasized to shed tears over him (peace be upon him).

Prophet Nuh (1

The name of Prophet Nuh had been A'bd al-Ghaffaar. After the lashing of the storm, the rising of the water and the drowning of the people, the archangel Jibraeel approached him and said: Some time back, your profession was carpentry, now turn to pottery!

When Prophet Nuh had constructed numerous pots, Jibraeel said to him: God has commanded you to break the pots. Nuh hurled some of the pots onto the ground and broke them – some of them he hurled lightly while others he dashed with reluctance and disinclination. A little later Jibraeel observed that he (peace be upon him)

۱- Tafseer al-Mu'een, pg. ۳۰۹.

?was not breaking any more pots and so questioned: Why don't you break them

He (peace be upon him) replied: My heart is unwilling to break them for I have spent a lot of effort in constructing them.

Jibraeel said to him (peace be upon him): O' Nuh! Do any of these pots possess life? Do they possess fathers, mothers etc.?

Continuing, he said: The earth and water are from God. Your only contribution was that you exerted yourself and constructed them, but yet you are reluctant and unwilling to break them. So how did you permit yourself to curse the people and destroy them all despite the fact that they had been created by God and possessed life and had fathers and mothers...?

Hearing this Nuh wept bitterly and intensely and hence came to acquire the title of Nuh.(۱)

۲) Prophet Yahya

Prophet Yahya (peace be upon him) once came to Bayt al-Maqdas and witnessed some clerics and priests wearing coarse garments and woolen caps. He requested his mother to arrange for him a similar dress so that he too could engage himself in worship with them. When his mother gave him the outfit, he engaged himself in worship in Bayt al-Maqdas.

One day, looking at himself in the mirror and observing that he had become very thin, he began to weep. God revealed to him: You weep because your body has become thin? By My Honour and Glory! If you were to possess the slightest awareness of the fire of Hell, you would have worn

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۱- Jaame' al-Nurain, pg. ۱۲۲.

.a garment made of iron rather than one made of fabric

.Hearing this, Yahya (peace be upon him) wept immensely and intensely

One day his father, Zakariya (peace be upon him) said to him: Dear son! Why do you !weep so much? I had sought you from God so that you may be the apple of my eye

Yahya (peace be upon him) replied: But were you not the one, who had said that between Paradise and Hell lies a pass; none shall traverse it except those who weep ?intensely out of fear of God

Yahya (peace be upon him) used to weep so much that his mother arranged for him two pieces of felt, which would absorb the tears which flowed from his eyes. When they would become drenched with his tears, he would squeeze the felt and tears .would flow down from them from between his fingers

Zakariya (peace be upon him) would look at his son, raise his head towards the heavens and say: O' Lord! This is my son and these are his tears and You are the most .Merciful of the merciful ones

When Yahya (peace be upon him) would hear the name of Sukran (a mountain in Hell), in a state of utter perturbation and distress, he would rush out into the desert crying: Woe (unto me) due to heedlessness (with respect to God), and his father and mother (would rush out after him in the desert.(١

The Intense Weeping of Hadhrat Zahra (٣

The loss of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy

p: ١١۶

.Risaalah Liqaa Allah, pg. ١۵٧; Amaali Al-Saduq -١

progeny), the sacrilege committed in connection with Wilayah and the injurious blows .(to her) caused Hadhrat Zahra (peace be upon her) to become tearful

The people of Medinah used to be inconvenienced by her weeping and so said to her (peace be upon her): We are troubled by your wailings! Thus she was compelled to go .to the graves of the martyrs of Uhud for weeping and then return to Medinah

In another tradition it has been reported that the elders of Medinah approached Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and said: O' Aba al-Hasan! Fatimah weeps during the day and the night and none of us are able to sleep at night. During the day, we are unable to rest due to our involvement in earning the livelihood, while at night we are unable to do so due to her (peace be upon her) weeping. Ask her to weep either during the day or during the night. The Imam (peace be upon him) conveyed this message to her (peace be upon her) whereupon she said: O' Aba Al-Hasan! I shall not remain in this world for long but shall shortly depart from amidst the people. I shall .never be able to calm myself from my weeping till I am united with my father

Imam (peace be upon him) constructed for her, in the cemetery of Baqee' outside Medinah, a room of bricks and date-palm leaves by the name of Bayt al-Ahzaan. Every morning, Zahra (peace be upon her) would take her children

and go to Baqee' where she would weep incessantly amongst the graves; when night (would fall, the Imam (peace be upon him) would come and bring her home with him.(1)

4) Thirty Five Years of Weeping!

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said: The fourth Imam (peace be upon him) wept for his father for around forty years, the days of which he used to remain in a state of fasting while the nights he would pass in worship. When it would be time for breaking the fast, his slave would bring food and water, and placing them before him, say: "Eat it". (Whereupon) he (peace be upon him) would say: "My father was killed in a state of hunger and thirst", and then he would weep so intensely that his food would become moistened by his tears. And this continued for as long as he was alive.

One of the friends of Imam Sajjaad (peace be upon him) says:

One day the Imam (peace be upon him) had started out for the desert and so I too went after him. When I found him, I saw him prostrating upon a rough stone, weeping and wailing and counted that he recited a dhikr a thousand times. He then raised his head (and I observed) that his face and beard were moistened with tears.

I said to him: O' My Master! End your sorrow and reduce your weeping! He said: Woe unto you! Ya'qub, the son of Ishaaq, was a prophet and the son of a prophet. He

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1- Museebat-e-Buzurg, pg. ۴۷; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۴۳, pg. ۱۵۵, ۱۷۷.

had twelve sons and when one of them was lost, he was so grieved that his hair turned white, his body bent over and due to the intense weeping his eyes lost their vision, and this despite the fact that his son was still alive. But I have seen my father, brother and seventeen persons from my family being killed and lying on the ground with my own eyes, so how can my sorrow end and how can the tears of my eyes (reduce?(١)

The Weeping of Mercy (۵

From his first wife Khadijah, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) had six children while from his other wives, it was only Maria Qibti, who bore one son, whom the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) named .Ibrahim

Ibrahim did not live for more than one year, two months and eight days and passed .away in the month of Dhul Hijjah in the year ٨ A.H

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was overcome with intense grief over the loss of Ibrahim and with tears flowing from his eyes involuntary, he was heard saying: The eyes are tearful and the heart is anguished (but) we shall not say anything, which shall anger the Lord. Surely we, O' Ibrahim, are grief-stricken .for you

A'aishah says: When tears began to flow from his eyes over his cheeks, a person said: "O' Prophet of God! You prohibit us from weeping whereas you yourself weep! The Holy Prophet

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.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ٢, pg. ۵٨٩; Anwaar al-Nu'maaniyyah, pg. ٢, pg. ٢٧ -١

peace be upon him and his holy progeny) explained: This is not weeping but mercy.) (One who does not exhibit mercy shall not be encompassed by mercy.(1)

Sins .80

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

فَكُلًّا أَخَذْنَا بِذَنبِهِ

(So each We punished for his sin"(2)"

:Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said

ليس من عرق يضرب و لا نكبه و لا صداع و لا مرض الا بذنب

No vein is cut, nor is there (any affliction by means of) adversity, headache or" (sickness except as a result of sins"(3)

Short Explanation

Committing sins is a disease, but ignorance with respect to faults that result in sins is .graver than the sins themselves

Considering sins to be trivial and insignificant is one of the greatest sins. If an offence is related to God like one, who does not offer his prayers, it is God, Who shall deal with this person as per His discretion. But if it is related to the people, things can become really difficult. This is because if forgiveness is not procured from the offended one, .things shall become all the more difficult on the Day of Judgment

The treatment of a sin commences by means of repentance and seeking of .forgiveness and concludes by resolving not to commit it again

If the Shaitaan happens to tempt a person into committing a sin, he should immediately repent and resolve to refrain from such acts in the future in order that .the effects of that sin do not get imprinted in his heart

The Banishment of the Sinners (۱

There lived in the tribe of Bani Israel a

p: ۱۲۰

.Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۷, pg. ۷۵; Wasaail al-Shia’h, vol. ۲, pg. ۹۲۱ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-A’nkabut (۲۹), vs. ۴۰ -۲

.Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۳, pg. ۴۷ -۳

licentious and sinning person, whose sinning and evil ways had left the people disturbed and exasperated as a result of which they turned to God to help them. God revealed to Prophet Musa to banish the youth from the city in order that the inhabitants of the city do not get caught in the punishment ordained for him.

When Prophet Musa banished him from the city, he proceeded to another city. It was ordered that he should be removed from that city too. This time, he sought refuge in a cave and fell sick with none to care for him in his state of sickness.

Prostrating before God, he wept in repentance of his sins and loneliness and beseeched: O' God! Forgive me! Had my wife and children been here, they would have wept at my wretchedness and desolation. O' God! You, Who have separated me from my father, mother and wife, do not burn me in Your fire (as a punishment) for my sins.

Subsequent to this supplication, God created angels in the form of his father, mother, wife and children and sent them to him. The youth was delighted to see his near ones near him in the grave and eventually died.

God revealed to Prophet Musa: Our friend has died in such and such place. Go, give him ablutions and bury him. When Musa reached the place, he found the person to be the same corrupt youth and so said to God: O' Lord! Is he not the same sinning

?youth whom You had ordered me to expel from the city

God revealed: O' Musa! I exhibited Mercy towards him. Due to his weeping, lamentations, sickness, separation from his land and relatives, confession of his sins (and seeking forgiveness, I have forgiven him.(۱

Prophet Isa and Praying for the Rains (۲

Prophet Isa (peace be upon him) and his companions came out of the city and into the deserts to pray for the rains. There he (peace be upon him) said to them: Those of yo, who have committed sins should return to the city. Hearing this instruction all of them returned back except one person. Turning to him, Isa (peace be upon him) said: Have you not committed any sin? He replied: I don't remember having committed any except for one instance when, as I stood engaged in prayers, a lady passed by before me. I looked at her and my eyes continued to follow her. But as soon as she had left, I had thrust my finger into the eyes and, pulling it out, had thrown it in the direction .where the lady had gone

Isa (peace be upon him) said: Pray and I shall say Aameen. He prayed and the rains (began to pour.(۲

The Reason for this Sin (۳

Regarding this sin, i.e. female infanticide in the Arabian Peninsula, it has been :recorded that

Once, during the reign of a king, one of the tribes rose up in revolt against him. In order to crush the rebellion, he dispatched an army. The army marched upon them, ,plundering their property and taking their ladies as captives

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.U'nwaan al-Kalaam, pg. ۸۷; Jaame' al-Akhbaar -۱

.Shanidani-ha-e-Taareekh, pg. ۲۲; Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۹۹ -۲

.while the males fled from the scene of carnage

When the ladies were brought before the king he ordered his soldiers to take one of .them for themselves

Meanwhile, the men of the tribe who had taken to flight regretted their action and said to their poets: Go before the king and recite verses, which indicate our .repentance and speak of our apologies

The poets, arriving before the king, conveyed their message to him and requested .him to return the ladies to the tribe

The king said: We have distributed the ladies amongst the men. We have left the choice upon them whether or not they wish to return with you. If they desire, they can .return and if they desire, they can remain here

Qais Ibn A'asim had a sister, who had been given to a strong and handsome youth. .She refused to return saying: I shall not return to my tribe

However much Qais, who was one of the elders of the tribe, pleaded and requested, she refused to give in, whereupon he blurted: Daughters do not have loyalty in them. From now on, whoever gives birth to a daughter should bury her alive. It was from (this time on that this act turned into a custom.(١

The Expiation of Sins (۴

One of the Prophets of Bani Israel happened to pass by a person, who had died under a collapsed wall and who was in a state such that half of his body that lay protruding .from under the wall had been torn apart by the wild beasts

The

.Jaame' al-Nurain, pg. ٧٨ -١

Prophet passed that city and entered another one. There he witnessed that one of the elders of that city had died; shrouded with a brocaded cloth, with incense and amber imparting a beautiful fragrance, his lifeless body was placed in an expensive coffin and a large crowd had turned up to attend his funeral procession!

The Prophet said: O' Lord! You are the Just and Wise, and never approve of injustice. Why is it that the person, who had never been tainted with polytheism, should die in that manner while this person, who had never worshipped You, should die in this fashion?

God revealed to him: It is just as you have stated, I am the Wise and never approve of injustice. However, that servant had some sins in his name and I desired that this death should serve as expiation for his sins so that he comes before Me, purified. As for that person, he had some good deeds in his account and I desired to reward him in this world so that when he comes before Me, he should not have any good deeds with him.(١)

۵) Hameed Ibn Qahtabah Taai

Abdullah Ibn Bazzaaz narrates:

Hameed and I were known to each other. One day at the time of Dhuhr of the month of Ramadhan and dressed to travel, I went to his place. When he was informed that I had come to meet him, he asked someone to bring me before him.

Entering the house, I found him inside. Greeting him, I seated myself, whereupon food

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١- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۵, pg. ۲۹۹; Al-Kafi, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۸۸.

was brought before me. He washed his hands and ordered me to do likewise so that .we could have our food. I thought to myself: I am in a state of fast

.He said to me: Eat the food

I said: O' Chief! It is the month of Ramadhan and I am not sick (so as to be exempted .from fasting). Hearing this, he began to weep and proceeded to eat his food

?When he had finished, I enquired: Why did you weep while eating your food

:He explained

One night during the time when Haroon al-Rashid, the Abbasid Caliph, ruled over the city of Toos, he summoned me. When I had arrived before him, he raised his head and looking at me, said: "In what measure do you obey the Caliph?" I said: "I obey him with .my life and wealth". He then lowered his head and permitted me to return

Hardly had I returned to my house when the Caliph's messenger arrived and said: The .Caliph wants to see you

I thought to myself: "Perhaps he has decided to kill me" and so recited: Inna Lillahi Wa .Inna Ilaihi Raajiu'n

When I had presented myself before him, he raised his head and asked: How much is ?your obedience to your Caliph

.I replied: With my life, wealth, wife and children

Hearing this he smiled and granted me permission to return home. I had hardly returned home before the Caliph's messenger arrived once again and said: The Caliph .summons you

,This time when I came before him

?he asked: How much do you obey your king

!I replied: By my life, wealth, wife, children and religion

This time the Caliph laughed and said: Take this sword and comply with what this .slave has to tell you

The slave led me to a house whose door was locked. He opened the door and I entered inside with him. Looking around I witnessed that it contained three rooms, .which were locked, and one well which lay in the middle of the courtyard

When the slave opened one of the rooms, I observed that it contained twenty people of the saadaat (descendants of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy .progeny)), young and old, fettered and in chains

.The slaved instructed: Kill them

As per his instruction, I killed all of them – the saadaat and the children of Ali (peace .(be upon him) and Fatimah (peace be upon her

When I had killed them, the slave pushed all their bodies into the well. He then opened the door to the second room and brought out another twenty saadaat to the mouth of .the well and I killed them too

Then opening the third room, he brought another group of twenty and I began to sever their heads from their bodies. I had severed the heads of nineteen persons from this group, when the last person, an old man with overgrown hair (due to his protracted stay in prison) said to me: O' Evil one! May you be accursed! What pretext would you

have on the Day of Judgment when you shall stand before our grandfather the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) after having killed sixty of his children.

Hearing this, a sudden tremor ran through my arms and body. The slave looked at me and said: Kill him. I killed him and the slave hurled his body into the well.

O' Abdullah! After having killed sixty persons from the descendants of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) how can prayers and fasts ever be of any benefit to me? I am certain that my abode is the fire of Hell.(١)

١- Kaifar-e-Kirdaar, vol. ١, pg. ٣٠٢; U'yoon Akhbaar al-Ridha, vol. ١, pg. ١٠٩.

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ٩

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ٢٠٠٧, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

Holding book reading competitions-

Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism- places

.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

Fabricatingdramatic and speech works-

Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-

Designing systems of accounting, media and mobile, automatic and handy systems,- web kiosks

Holding virtual educational courses for the public-

Holding virtual teacher-training courses-

Producing thousands of research software in three languages (Persian, Arabic and- English) which can be performed in computers, tablets and cellphones and available and downloadable with eight international formats: JAVA, ANDROID, EPUB, CHM, PDF, HTML, CHM, GHB on the website

Also producing four markets named "Ghaemiyeh Book Market" with Android, IOS,- WINDOWS PHONE and WINDOWS editions

:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

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